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My study analyzes moments of conflict and gender crisis in Cherokee society from 1775-1846; moments when balance and harmony were threatened, and the efforts by Cherokee men to either reestablish a balance between men and women or harmony between men. The pressures of colonialism required Cherokee men to continuously renegotiate their manhood. This project considers change and continuity in Cherokee society through the consideration of masculinity: how it was contested and how it evolved. To do this I look at the impact of gender relations on Cherokee politics and diplomacy, and other expressions of manhood. This work analyzes how competing notions of masculinity shaped experiences such as Cherokee participation: in the American Revolution, the creation of the Chickamauga towns, the United States' "civilization" program, voluntary migrations, and forced Removal. Ultimately, gender relations among men and between men and women shaped Cherokee politics and identity in the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The vast majority of Native gender histories have, up until very recently, been about women due to the assumption that all history is men's history. Gender, including manhood, is a social construct, and as a result it is always evolving to respond to internal and external pressures. My study is important because it is not just an examination of Cherokee men, it is an illustration of how they reinterpreted and recreated their roles and responsibilities in response to colonial pressures. This says a great deal about Cherokee identity more broadly, and the active role that American Indians played in shaping their

identities. Knowing one side of Native gender constructions is not enough, and my work addresses this significant gap in Cherokee and Southeastern American Indian historiography. Ultimately, Cherokee ideals of manhood and womanhood lay at the center of what it meant to be a Cherokee; therefore, this project utilizes gender not only as a category for analysis but also as a lived experience.

SONS OF SELU: MASCULINITY AND GENDERED POWER IN
CHEROKEE SOCIETY, 1775-1846

by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

My study analyzes moments of conflict and gender crisis in Cherokee society from 1775 to 1846; moments when balance and harmony were threatened, and the efforts by Cherokee men to either reestablish a balance between men and women or harmony between men. The pressures of colonialism required Cherokee men to continuously renegotiate their manhood. This project considers change and continuity in Cherokee society through the consideration of masculinity: how it was contested and how it evolved. To do this I look at the impact of gender relations on Cherokee politics and diplomacy, and other expressions of manhood. My study is an ethnohistorical study that expands understandings of gender relations in Southeastern Indian communities, specifically the Cherokee, to illuminate the active role that Natives played in shaping their identities and responding to internal and external pressures of colonialism.

Gender, because it is socially constructed, is a useful analytical tool because it provides historians with a window into people's perceptions of their own identity as well as that of others.¹ Colonialism brought various cultural and economic pressures to bear on

¹ For discussion of gender as a useful analytical tool see: Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, No. 5 (December 1986): 1053-75; Gail Bedermen, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 7; Nancy Shoemaker, *Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 5; Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: The

historic Cherokee mores. The time period of this study reflects the beginning of intense American colonialism in 1775 with the onset of the American Revolution, and ends in 1846, when the Cherokees signed a treaty between themselves and the federal government that established a government and ended the violence generated by Removal. This dissertation is an examination of how Cherokee men responded to these pressures. Masculine activities such as warfare, diplomacy, hunting, and the roles of Cherokee men in clan relationships receive particular attention.² This work analyzes how competing notions of masculinity shaped experiences such as Cherokee participation: in the American Revolution, the creation of the Chickamauga towns, the United States' "civilization" program, voluntary migrations, and forced Removal. While American colonialism impacted all Southeastern Native groups and their gendered identities, the Cherokees are a particularly illuminating case because of their efforts, as well as the efforts of their advocates, to highlight their adoption of Anglo-American culture. One purpose of this study is to explore the cultural motivations and underpinnings for the

University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 10-11; Rebecca Kugel and Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, *Native Women's History in Eastern North America before 1900* (2007), xxvi; Gunlog Fur, *A Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial Encounters Among the Delaware Indians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 2-3.

² According to Theda Perdue, "The basic unit of kinship in Cherokee society was the clan." There are seven clans in Cherokee society: *Aniwahiya* (Wolf); *Anikawi* (Deer); *Anidjiskwa* (Bird); *Aniwodi* (Paint); *Anisahoni* (Blue?); *Anigotigewi* (Wild Potato?); *Anigilohi* (Twister?). Descent was traced through the mother, and children were not considered "blood relatives" of their father. The familial responsibility that a Cherokee man had for his sister's children was greater than for his own. Perdue argues for the centrality of clan identity in *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 42-47; Tyler Boulware has recently argued against the importance of clans as the central point of identity in Cherokee society. See *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation: Town, Region, and Nation among Eighteenth-Century Cherokees* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2011), 4-5. Instead, Boulware suggests that scholars consider the importance of the town as a source of identity. While this work does not intend to disregard town identities, because the part of the focus on manhood here centers on the familial roles of Cherokee men, clan identity will take center stage.

change experienced in Cherokee society as a result of American colonialism, as well as to feature aspects of continuity in gender ideals and expressions. Ultimately, gender relations among men and between men and women shaped Cherokee politics and identity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Struggles to maintain and/or reestablish balance and harmony varied throughout this time period. At times balance between genders seemed more important, and at other times more effort was placed in maintaining harmony among men. The pressures of colonialism required Cherokee men to continuously renegotiate their manhood. To a certain degree, decisions regarding identity were made at a conscious level—men decided to be this kind of person or that kind of person, but identity was predominantly shaped unconsciously and was informed by the ubiquitous Cherokee cultural tenet of balance.³ Balance and harmony guided much of Cherokee life in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Cherokee men and women had specific occupations, and the prescribed activities sought to maintain a balance between sexes. As Theda Perdue points out, *asgaya* (“man”) and *agehya* (“woman”) differentiate between human beings, but no hierarchy or categorical ranking exists in the Cherokee language because the Cherokee

³ Greg O’Brien highlights the constant process of cultural evolution among Native peoples in response to the internal and external pressures brought by American colonialism. O’Brien argues that Native societies, like all societies, underwent cultural change in which aspects of tradition were adapted to embrace or combat competing forms of culture and belief. As O’Brien asserts, “Contentions over the basis of power within a society in turn shape the outward expressions of culture.” See Greg O’Brien, *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), xvii. Thus, notions of power lay at the center of cultural struggles and adaptations to express gender and other societal ideals. Raymond Fogelson also concludes that Cherokee behavior was “premised on implicit notions of power.” See Raymond D. Fogelson, “Cherokee Notions of Power” in *Anthropology of Power: Ethnographic Studies from Asia, Oceania, and the New World*. Raymond D. Fogelson and Richard N. Adams, eds. (New York: Academic Press, 1977).

language does not have gender-specific pronouns.⁴ The cosmology of Selu and Kana'ti supported these divided responsibilities and specified that women had power through their ability to create life (human and plant) and men through their ability to take life (human and animal). Gender dictated the roles that women and men performed in Cherokee society. Gendered responsibilities, such as social and economic activities, were thus supported by the separate roles ascribed to Selu and Kana'ti in Cherokee cosmology. Their activities and sources of power were created and maintained with balance between men and women in mind.⁵

Balance was a central tenet in Cherokee society applying to all aspects of life, including gender roles. Gender dictated the roles that women and men performed in Cherokee society. Gendered responsibilities were supported by the separate roles ascribed to Selu and Kana'ti, the first woman and man in Cherokee cosmology. Selu and women provided corn, and by extension held spiritual and gender power through their ability to produce life (both human and plant). Kana'ti was a hunter; therefore, Cherokee men provided food from their hunts. In this way, men held spiritual and gender power through their ability to take life away. With Selu and Kana'ti as examples, Cherokee men and women performed specific gendered roles in their communities from which they

⁴ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 40.

⁵ Theda Perdue argues that "balance" was a central theme that impacted the framework of Cherokee society. Selu and Kana'ti were the first man and first woman in Cherokee cosmology. Selu provided corn for her family, and Kana'ti was a great hunter. In this way, Selu and Kana'ti provided the basic gendered occupations for Cherokee society: women farmed and men hunted. The two sons of this first couple grew suspicious of their mother's ability to create corn. The sons mistakenly believed that their mother was a witch, and they killed her. The death of Selu disrupted the harmony that existed within the family. In response to the death of his wife, Kana'ti left his children and went his own way. This Cherokee cosmology provided Cherokee men with a model to manage disharmony. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 13-15.

obtained and demonstrated their spiritual power. Both relied on the shedding of blood. While women's gendered power was inherent, men's was performative, so there was an onus on men to reinvent their roles in the wake of colonialism as the ability to take life, either through hunting or war, became increasingly difficult. These activities and sources of power created and maintained balance between men and women. While balance or harmony between genders has been explored, most notably by Theda Perdue, the efforts of men to maintain harmony among each other is a lesser explored topic in Cherokee history, and my work directly addresses this gap.

According to Perdue, women experienced greater persistence in their gendered roles in society.⁶ Since she argues that Cherokee men experienced cultural change much more acutely than did women, it is crucial to further understand the impact colonial pressures had on men and how they responded to gain a more complete understanding of Cherokee society.⁷ In addition to their efforts to maintain balance between genders, Cherokee men also strove to maintain harmony among men. In their political interactions, Cherokee men sought to further their goals and visions while maintaining harmony among the larger polity. This emphasis of harmony between men is termed the good man ideal. To examine relationships among men, I rely on anthropologist Fred Gearing's

⁶ Perdue asserts that the eighteenth century witnessed a great deal of continuity in women's roles, and while the nineteenth century brought change, Cherokee women implemented this change in traditional ways. See *Cherokee Women*, 9. *Cherokee Women* represents the accumulation and maturation of Perdue's previous examinations of Cherokee gender. In fact, this work marks a departure from her earlier arguments that asserted a loss of power among Cherokee women. See "Cherokee Women and the Trail of Tears" and "Women, Men and American Indian Policy: The Cherokee Response to "Civilization." *Cherokee Women* instead presents a more nuanced depiction of women's roles in change and continuity through their efforts to renegotiate their gender roles and by extension, gendered power.

⁷ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 64.

concept of the “good man ideal.” In order to avoid disharmony, “the good man ideal” encouraged Cherokee men to “assert their interests cautiously,” “quietly go [their] own way,” and if conflict still could not be avoided “a good Cherokee withdraws from it—physically.”⁸ According to the good man ideal, Cherokee men could continue to pursue their own interests, but they were expected to not directly frustrate the actions of others. To do so would risk a disruption in harmony. The precedent for physically removing oneself to avoid disharmony can also be found in Cherokee cosmology with Selu and Kana’ti.

Selu provided corn for her family, and Kana’ti was a great hunter. The two sons of this first couple grew suspicious of their mother’s ability to create corn. The sons mistakenly believed that their mother was a witch, and they killed her. The death of Selu disrupted the harmony that existed within the family. In response to the death of his wife, Kana’ti left his children and physically relocated away from the disharmony. This Cherokee cosmology provided Cherokee men with a model to manage disharmony. The good man ideal, a culturally specific method of dealing with political disagreement, served Cherokee interests until forced Removal made this tactic untenable. Previous relocations ensured harmony because they allowed men to express their political beliefs without disrupting Cherokee society by introducing conflicting visions into one town or region, but as the subject of land exchange and Removal became more frequently pressed by the federal government, men could no longer be allowed to “go their own way”

⁸ Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors: Social Structures for Cherokee Politics in the 18th Century,” *The American Anthropological Association*. Memoir 93 vol. 64, no. 5 (October 1962): 31-32.

because it threatened sovereignty. The eventual forced Removal of the Cherokees to Indian Territory shattered the good man ideal and violence between Cherokee men resulted.⁹

The increased pressures of colonialism after the American Revolution placed a greater sense of urgency on negotiations to come to a consensus on Cherokee identity. It became increasingly clear that the American settlers and their governments would persistently test, and at times deny, the sovereignty of the Cherokee nation. In this way, a man's decision regarding his masculine ideal and how he chose to express that ideal meant much more than a decision to farm or hunt; it impacted the Cherokees' geopolitical standing. These burdens that attended daily-lived gender expressions resulted in tensions between Cherokees. These tensions remained bubbling below the surface until the politics of Removal brought them erupting to the fore.

Gender and power are often discussed together. Early gender histories focused on women: the lives of women that the traditional narrative had ignored, and women's attainment of power in patriarchal structures of Western society that oppressed women through language and other intrinsic forms of control.¹⁰ Native gender histories have followed a similar trajectory through their wedding of gender power and the roles of

⁹ Fred Gearing, "Priests and Warriors: Social Structures for Cherokee Politics in the 18th Century," *The American Anthropological Association*. Memoir 93 vol. 64, no. 5 (October, 1962).

¹⁰ For a detailed description on women's and gender history, theory, and methodology see Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis."

women in Indian societies.¹¹ Of course, in both Western and Native societies, men also sought to create gender identities and power.

Most Native gender histories focus on the role of women and their relative absence in the historical narrative. This objective remains important, but to gain a full picture of Indian societies we must have an understanding of the roles of both men and women. Just as Euro-American men (frequently our sources on Native life) often disregarded women's roles in diplomacy and other societal functions, these observers equally overlooked the cultural significance of men's roles that did not fit within their patriarchal mold. Thus, it is important to direct attention to Indian men more directly to better understand the lived experiences of Native Americans.

¹¹ Kathryn Braund, "Guardians of Tradition and Handmaidens to Change: Women's Roles in Creek Economic and Social Life during the Eighteenth Century," *American Indian Quarterly* 14, No. 3 (Summer 1990): 239-58; Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, *Women and Power in Native North America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1995). Klein and Ackerman clearly state in their introduction that they are concerned with highlighting the changes in gender roles wrought by colonialism, with special attention directed toward women and their responsibilities and position in Native society; Nancy Shoemaker argues that gender is socially constructed. Even though Native culture dictated specific roles and responsibilities to men and women, individuals maintained agency in the negotiation and change of these roles depending on internal or external impetuses. In Native societies, gender influenced as much as it was shaped by economic, political, and other social factors. Because of the importance of gender in Native social structures, gender disparities in contact situations allowed people to measure the "Other" and understand or misconstrue the "Others'" words and actions. See Nancy Shoemaker, *Negotiators of Change*, 5-20; Sarah Hill's work addresses change and continuity in Cherokee society through her study of women's craft as basket weavers and the changing materials that made up their baskets. See *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Barr asserts that "in some ways, it is an old-fashioned insight that gender is about power, but in native worlds, where kinship provided the foundation for every institution of their societies, gender and power were inseparable." See Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman*, 2; Kugel and Murphy suggest using gender as an analytical tool to analyze specific sets of topics: the different experiences and responsibilities of men and women; expected gender roles, their rigidity and changes over time; and how men and women interacted with each other. They also highlight a point that directly applies to Cherokee society, when they ask: what does it say about the structuring of Native thought if pronouns are ungendered and one always refers to "he/she" or "her/his"? See Rebecca Kugel and Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, *Native Women's History in Eastern North America before 1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), xvi-xvii.

This study contributes to the fields of gender and ethnohistory in several ways. Most important of these is the gap that it fills in the scholarship of the Native South: to date, the only full-length work that addresses masculinity is Susan Abram's work on Cherokee participation in the Creek War. While Abram's study investigates the gendered motivations and outcomes surrounding Cherokee involvement in the Creek War, it is a temporally limited study focused on a specific moment in Cherokee history. Abram's previous work on Cherokee masculinity highlights the spiritual significance and ritual involved in warfare and how late eighteenth-century war culture impacted Cherokee ideals and expressions of manhood.¹² Other studies of Cherokee manhood detail how land cessions threatened the ability of Cherokee men to hunt, which limited their ability to express their masculinity and demonstrate their ability to support a family.¹³ Greg O'Brien's essay on Choctaw masculinity offers points of comparison for the Cherokee experience. O'Brien argues that as elite Choctaw men found themselves unable to demonstrate their manhood through hunting and warfare in the nineteenth century, these men adopted material expressions of their status as men in Choctaw society.¹⁴

¹² Susan Abram, *Forging a Cherokee-American Alliance in the Creek War: From Creation to Betrayal* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2015). Susan Abram, "Real Men: Masculinity, Spirituality, and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Cherokee Warfare," in *New Men: Manliness in Early America* Thomas A. Foster, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 93-116.

¹³ Nathaniel Sheidley, "Hunting and the Politics of Masculinity in Cherokee Treaty-making, 1763-75," in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850* Martin Daunt and Rick Halpern, eds. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 167-85; Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

¹⁴ Greg O'Brien, "Trying to Look Like Men: Changing Notions of Masculinity Among Choctaw Elites in the Early Republic," in *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South* Craig Friend and Lorri Glover, eds. (University of Georgia Press, 2004), 49-70.

Other recent efforts to discuss Cherokee masculinity often fail to fully incorporate Native culture.¹⁵ This work will be solidly ethnohistorical, as it will connect gender roles with gender power and gender power with spiritual power to emphasize how Cherokees formulated their identity, not only among themselves, but also between their Indian and Euro-American neighbors. Concepts of gender roles and gender identities were completely enmeshed and supported by Cherokee cosmology and ritual. Cherokees themselves would never have considered them distinctly separate, and in order to properly represent Cherokee society, this work will address them together as well.

Declension, or the decline of Native power as a result of colonialism, is an issue that all scholars struggle with when writing Indian history. A gender study is particularly helpful in overcoming the declension model, because even though Cherokees lost sovereign power in the wake of colonialism, they continued to negotiate and maintain power within their families, clans, and communities. Studies that end with Removal (in many ways the climax of colonialism in the Native South) perpetuate a declension model.

¹⁵ Considering “recent” works to be those published in this century, Tyler Boulware’s “We are MEN”: Native American and Euroamerican Projections of Masculinity During the Seven Years’ War,” in *New Men: Manliness in Early America* Thomas A. Foster, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 70-92 analyzes and compares the masculine rhetoric that Cherokees and Euro-Americans employed to define themselves and emasculate the other; however, Boulware makes little attempt to explain and contextualize Cherokee rhetoric within their cultural framework and gendered ideals. Paul Kelton does not address masculinity specifically, but his discussion of war and diplomacy, two decidedly male activities in Cherokee society, offers little analysis of culture, particularly regarding Cherokee employment of kinship terms such as “elder brother,” “uncle,” and “father” when engaging in diplomacy with the Iroquois and the British. See Paul Kelton, “The British and Indian War: Cherokee Power and the Fate of Empire in North America,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 2012): 763-92. Michele LeMaster provides a better example for a cultural approach to Cherokee gender in her recent work, but she fails to make clear connections between Cherokee masculinity and gendered and spiritual power. See Michele LeMaster, *Brothers Born of One Mother: British-Native American Relations in the Colonial Southeast* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012).

By following the Cherokees west and remaining there with them during their initial resettlement, this study highlights the rather contentious struggles that occurred between groups over the nature of Cherokee manhood and identity in a new and unfamiliar territory.

This work seeks to directly address this gap in the scholarship as well as to expand on previous studies of gender and cultural change.¹⁶ While the work of

¹⁶ Claudio Saunt argues that market forces and colonialism, more generally, created gendered strife in Creek communities, as these pressures and the imbalance between men and women's traditional roles it created led Creek men to grow increasingly insecure in their manhood. Saunt presents the case that Creek women lost much of their traditional power as they were forced out of necessary roles by the market. Most notably, men no longer needed women to dress skins when the demand for raw hides grew. No longer needing women, men's new economic bread-winning status elevated their gendered authority in Creek society. Women's efforts to find their place in the market and achieve/maintain gendered equality was attempted in many ways, or most notably in spinning. Some Creek men felt comfortable demonstrating their masculinity through symbols of Euro-Americanism. Others, however, struggled to redefine themselves as men. These troubled warriors tended to strike out at the sources of their cultural change: white people, their livestock, homes, and other accouterments. Saunt argues that they attacked women, often maiming their bodies, as a way of acting out their gendered struggle/fear that women held too much power. For an exclusive focus on this argument see: "Domestick . . . Quiet being broke": Gender conflict among Creek Indians in the Eighteenth Century," in *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830* Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fredrika J. Teute eds. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). This thesis also appears in Saunt's full length work: *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Cherokees do not seem to have suffered from the same insecurities as their Muskogee neighbors. This is most likely because Cherokee society was more egalitarian, and Cherokee women held greater economic power traditionally, compared to Creek women. Perhaps the best example to demonstrate this is land ownership. Creek agricultural lands were owned by the town. In Cherokee society, women and matrilineages possessed ownership of agricultural land. For more on this and other structural differences between the Cherokees and Creeks see: Richard A. Sattler, "The Southeast Women's Status Among the Muskogee and Cherokee," *Women and Power in Native North America*, 216-25; Nathaniel Sheidley posits that "the politics of masculinity" forced elder Cherokees to acquire gifts to distribute as status symbols in an attempt to placate younger warriors and keep them from raiding Euro-American settlers. These gifts were attained through the sale of land. Thus began a cycle of land sales to acquire gifts to mollify young men's desires to raid and hunt, which in turn angered warriors and encouraged them to engage in raiding parties on their own and with other Indians, such as the Shawnee, Seneca, and Creek. Sheidley does a good job explaining, by way of culture, the reasons for both the older men's desire to keep warriors in the village, as well as the warriors' need to hunt. See "Hunting and the politics of masculinity in Cherokee treaty-making," 167-85. In this way, Sheidley better contextualizes and explains the generational division in Revolution-era Cherokee society presented by Colin Calloway in *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 182-212. Jon Parmenter also discusses the generational discord created

ethnohistorians has broadened our understanding of Native societies, we still lack a full understanding of the nuances of relationships, both within and among various Indian groups. We must endeavor to recreate Native lived experience if we are ever to more seamlessly incorporate Indians into the broader narrative of American history. This study seeks to do just that through its analysis of gender structures and their roles in shaping politics and diplomacy, modes of production and trade, as well as spirituality.

Diplomacy is the one theme that is threaded throughout my current project. Men's gendered role as diplomats remained constant from 1775-1846, even while the societal expectations for Cherokee men's behavior in this role evolved during this time. This particular male role in Cherokee society, then, proves a useful window through which to evaluate cultural change. As diplomats, Cherokee men performed valuable roles in their

by land sales in his essay "Dragging Canoe (Tsi'yu-gunsi'ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot," *The Human Tradition in The American Revolution* Nancy L. Rhoden and Ian K. Steele eds. (Wilmington: SR Books, 2000), 117-37. According to Parmenter, the inability of Cherokee men to hunt threatened their identity as men. Without the ability to hunt, men could not demonstrate their ability to provide for a family; therefore, young Cherokee men became less attractive mates to women. War, another means for Cherokee men to demonstrate their manhood had disappeared as an opportunity after the close of the so-called Cherokee War in 1761, according to Parmenter. This fact put even greater emphasis on hunting as a way to demonstrate masculinity; See Tyler Boulware, "We are MEN." Ultimately, Boulware concludes that because war was the primary male responsibility in both Native and Western societies, masculine rhetoric predicated on their existence as warriors allowed Indian and British men to communicate with one another. However, generalizations about "Native" ideologies regarding societal structure and gender power run the risk of overlooking nuance. In this case, Boulware's essay relies on generalizations about shared hierarchies in Indian and British society regarding war, but most of his examples are Cherokee. This is problematic because Cherokee women held a tremendous amount of political power in their society when compared to other Native groups, as is exhibited by Perdue in *Cherokee Women*, women continued to have public influence in political matters such as war despite the pressures of colonialism; See Michele LeMaster, *Brothers Born of One Mother*. LeMaster examines the relationship between the British and Native South by way of several themes that all center around familial or kinship connections: the use of kinship terminology in diplomacy; the rhetoric of manhood in warfare; women's roles in warfare; both sexes roles in trade; and benefits and complications of intermarriage. LeMaster's work is a study of cultural exchange, and her use of familial and kinship rhetoric and discourse highlights the commonalities and differences of Indian and British societies. In this way, LeMaster contextualizes the agreements and misunderstandings that emerged from this shared, but often misinterpreted diplomatic language of family and kinship.

communities and in clans. In addition to acting as diplomats, I also examine the other ways that Cherokee men demonstrated their manhood and fulfilled gendered expectations. These include historic expressions including warfare and hunting, as well as newer demonstrations like the embrace of the American government's "civilization" program (which was essentially a government subsidized program of assimilation). Throughout these examples I pay particular attention to the cultural motivations of Cherokee men.

Chapter II examines the disputed nature of Cherokee masculinity during the American Revolution and the so-called Chickamauga War by highlighting the threats posed to Cherokee masculinity, as well as the ways that different groups of Cherokees responded—with one group of men promoting peace and another engaging in raids upon white settlements. This examination of competing expressions of Cherokee masculinity, which are inherently tied to Cherokee identity more broadly, demonstrates this period's implications for the more thoroughly documented gender crisis in Cherokee society in the early nineteenth century, and it also lays the foundation for Cherokee men's responses to other conflicts discussed in other chapters. Disgusted by continued land cessions, a group of Cherokee men relocated and established themselves in new towns along Chickamauga Creek in the late eighteenth century.

The steps taken by these men represent the varying stages of the good man ideal: at first, they quietly endured; then they protested, and when things did not change they withdrew from the conflict to continue in their terms. In this way, Chickamauga men

attempted to maintain harmony among Cherokee men during the Revolutionary era. In addition, men in Chickamauga towns endeavored to perform familiar gender roles and expressed their manhood in historically acceptable ways. In Chickamauga towns men raided and hunted, while women remained in the towns tending to their cornfields and providing other household responsibilities. Chickamauga towns provided an outlet for Cherokee men to engage in masculine acts, as well as have those acts validated and praised through scalp dances and celebrations. Thus, Chickamauga towns provided men with an opportunity to achieve their manhood through historic and familiar rites, as well as demonstrate their masculinity through outward expressions and rituals of their battle successes.

Chapter III analyzes the role of masculinity as a shaper of Cherokee identity in the early nineteenth century, with a particular focus on responses to the United States government's policy of "civilization." The close of the Chickamauga wars and the decreased market for animal pelts closed well-established paths to manhood such as hunting and warfare; however, the need to express one's masculinity did not fade. This chapter examines the continued importance of Cherokee masculinity during the early nineteenth century through the lives of Chickamauga warriors turned successful business men, such as The Ridge, Doublehead, Bloody Fellow, and others. These men were motivated by the Cherokee cultural requirement that men openly demonstrate their masculinity. These former warriors seemingly embraced "civilization," as they operated plantations, ferries, and other businesses and amassed individual wealth. In spite of their

efforts to acquire personal property, Cherokee men continued to fulfill societal expectations that they act as the protectors of clans and communities by securing Cherokee sovereignty. While the avenues they utilized differed from eighteenth-century models, these former Chickamauga warriors desired to demonstrate their gendered power in a way available to them. Their responses to this period of significant cultural change were motivated by the vulnerability of balance between men's and women's gendered expressions.

Cherokees slowly began migrating west in the 1780s or 1790s. The Spanish gave permission for the first Cherokee migrants to settle along the St. Francis River to act as a buffer against the Osage. Cherokees continued to relocate west of the Mississippi River throughout the early nineteenth century; by 1811, the largest Cherokee settlement was the largest in Arkansas, and by 1820 one-third of the Cherokee population resided in Arkansas Territory. Chapter IV examines these western Cherokees, their decisions to willingly migrate, and the impact these decisions had on expressions of manhood. In the west Cherokee men continued eighteenth-century traditions of hunting and warfare. The last eighteenth-century example we have of Cherokee attempts to create such an existence in the east is the formation of the Chickamauga towns, and as such they offer an instructive point of comparison for the western Cherokees, specifically the decision to move and the ritualistic nature of warfare. (Also significant is the fact that many of the western Cherokee migrants were former Chickamauga warriors.) This chapter considers the push-pull factors of Cherokee migration—the pressures of colonialism in the east that

provided the impetus to move west and the alternative characteristics of life west of the Mississippi that enticed Cherokee families to relocate.

In the Arkansas and Missouri Territories, societal structures and economies differed greatly from those east of the Mississippi for Indians and Euro-Americans alike. Migrants to these territories engaged in subsistence farming and small-scale husbandry, but most importantly in trapping, hunting, and trade. When the Chickamaugas ended their war with United States settlers, in the 1790s the federal government simultaneously employed its plan of “civilization.” As Cherokee men responded to this in different ways; the Western Cherokees chose to relocate west of the Mississippi, thereby employing the good man ideal by going their own way. Relocating west offered Cherokee men an economic opportunity through the fur trade and allowed them to express political dissent without creating conflict.

Chapter V examines the Removal era and how events caused men to openly debate and renegotiate their roles as Cherokee men. Disputes over Removal were venues where Cherokee men continued to reinterpret their manhood in the wake of colonialism. Eighteenth-century masculine ideals, such as the warrior or hunter, do not necessarily apply to Cherokee men during the Removal era, but diplomatic expectations continued. Treaty party members like Major Ridge, as well as leaders like John Ross, participated in plantation slavery, operated other burgeoning businesses like river ferries, owned large amounts of livestock, and served as political representatives for Cherokee communities. The wealth they accumulated set them apart from many of their countrymen—they were

an elite minority. Even so, most Cherokee men, regardless of economic status, practiced animal husbandry and engaged in agricultural pursuits by the 1820s. Thus, it does not seem that Cherokee men supported either the vision of Major Ridge or John Ross based upon the types of lifestyles these men led. While eighteenth-century expressions of masculinity such as warfare and hunting faded from eastern Cherokee life, diplomacy remained an avenue for men to prove themselves in the nineteenth century. During the early nineteenth century, the battle to protect the Cherokee people and their towns moved into a decidedly political sphere. In this way, Cherokee men continued in their eighteenth-century gendered roles as diplomats. Even as they continued in their traditional political roles, the good man ideal was no longer enough to shelter Cherokee men and society from the disharmony wrought by colonialism. Individual politics could no longer guide men's decisions. Instead, they had to bear the responsibility of the collective.

The conflicts presented in this study forced Cherokee people to renegotiate their gendered ideals and their identity. Contests over masculine ideals continued with the expansion of the Keetoowahs, which are now their own federally recognized Cherokee tribe, but also in day-to-day lived experiences, as Cherokees worshipped in Christian churches, practiced traditional medicine, or some combination thereof; as families divided the labor of their household tasks; and as more and more education opportunities were offered and taken by Cherokees of both sexes. While Cherokees never regained the

social egalitarianism and economic equality of their pre-colonial past, consensus did emerge in the form of an accepted historical narrative.

My dissertation examines patterns of change and the existence of continuity regarding ideals of manhood and expressions of gendered power in Cherokee society during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Cherokee masculinity was a socially constructed form of identity, and Cherokee men continued to reinterpret their manhood in the wake of colonialism and its impacts, to preserve their gendered power in their communities. Men sought to avoid not only a crisis in masculinity, but also a spiritual crisis, as gender and spirituality depended upon each other. Utilizing a framework of competing notions of manhood addresses the divided opinions regarding participation in various conflicts and diplomatic efforts.

The vast majority of Native gender histories have, up until very recently, been about women due to the assumption that all history is men's history. Gender, including manhood, is a social construct, and as a result it is always evolving to respond to internal and external pressures. My study is important because it is not just an examination of Cherokee men, it is an illustration of how they reinterpreted and recreated their roles and responsibilities in response to colonial pressures. These adjustments say a great deal about Cherokee identity more broadly and the active role that American Indians played in shaping their identities. Knowing one side of Native gender constructions is not enough; my work addresses this significant gap in Cherokee and Southeastern American Indian historiography. Ultimately, Cherokee ideals of manhood and womanhood lay at the

center of what it meant to be a Cherokee; therefore, this project utilizes gender not only as a category for analysis but also as a lived experience.

CHAPTER II

“WE WILL HAVE OUR LANDS”: CHEROKEE MASCULINITY AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHICKAMAUGA TOWNS, 1776-1794

In March 1775, a group of Cherokee headmen sold approximately 27,000 square miles of land to Richard Henderson, a lawyer and representative of the Transylvania Land Company. Both the Cherokee headmen and Henderson ignored the ban on Indian sales to private individuals established by the Royal Proclamation of 1763. Henderson received most of present-day Kentucky and the Cherokee headmen that signed the deed received some £10,000 in trade goods. Not all Cherokees were pleased with this agreement, and it was at this meeting that one warrior, Dragging Canoe (*Tsi'yu-gunsi'ni*), spoke openly and persuasively in opposition to the continuous cessions of land by Cherokee headmen. Dragging Canoe contended that this land sale, much like the previous cessions, would satisfy white settlers for only a short time, and eventually the Cherokees would have no more land of their own, and “the extinction of the whole race will be proclaimed.”¹ Rather than see this occur, Dragging Canoe urged:

Should we not therefore run all risks, and incur all consequences, rather than submit to the loss of our country? Such treaties may be all right for men who are too old to hunt or fight. As for me, I have my young warriors about me. We will have our lands.²

¹ Quoted in Pat Alderman, *Nancy Ward and Dragging Canoe* (Johnson City: Overmountain Press, 1978), 38.

² Ibid.

This speech given at Sycamore Shoals foretold the formation of the five Chickamauga towns (see Figure 1), a population that reached seven hundred warriors, and offered active and violent resistance to American settlers until 1794.³

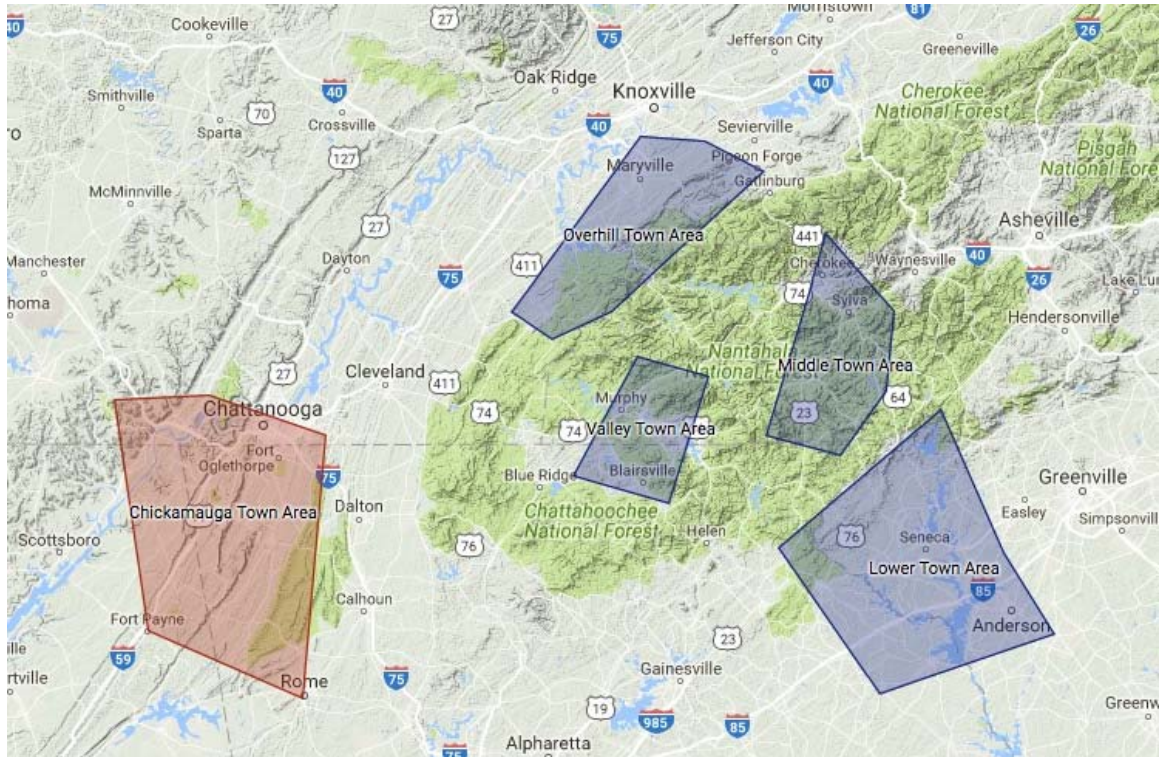


Figure 1. Eighteenth-Century Cherokee Town Regions.⁴

This chapter analyzes the role of masculinity as a shaper of Cherokee responses to pressures, such as land cessions, on their society during the Revolutionary period, specifically the masculine expressions of Chickamauga Cherokees. In traditional

³ Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 189-90; Jon Parmenter, "Dragging Canoe (Tsi'yu-gunsi'ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot," *The Human Tradition in The American Revolution*, Nancy L. Rhoden and Ian K. Steele eds. (Wilmington: SR Books, 2000), 118-20; 130-31.

⁴ Map created by Jamie Mize utilizing Google Maps.

Cherokee society, masculinity was connected to war, hunting, and once a man reached an advanced age, diplomacy. A Cherokee boy's ability to achieve manhood depended upon his ability to take life, animal and human, and later in life Cherokee men continued to demonstrate their manhood through their adeptness as diplomats. This chapter examines the disputed nature of Cherokee masculinity during the American Revolution and the Chickamauga War, which ended in 1794, by highlighting the threats posed to Cherokee masculinity, as well as the ways that different groups of Cherokees responded: with one group of men promoting peace and another engaging in raids upon white settlements and attempting to create Pan-Indian alliances to defeat Anglo-American settlers. This examination of competing expressions of Cherokee masculinity, which are inherently tied to Cherokee identity more broadly, demonstrates this period's implications for the more thoroughly documented gender crisis in Cherokee society in the early nineteenth century.⁵

The existing scholarship on Chickamauga Cherokees is scant, but we do know some important things about the Cherokees from the five Chickamauga towns. I use the term Chickamauga Cherokees throughout this chapter to describe those that settled in the

⁵ For essays addressing masculinity specifically in regard to hunting and warfare see: Nathaniel Sheidley, "Hunting and the politics of masculinity in Cherokee treaty-making, 1763-75," in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850* Martin Daunt and Rick Halpern, eds. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 167-85; Greg O'Brien, "Trying to Look Like Men: Changing Notions of Masculinity Among Choctaw Elites in the Early Republic," in *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South* Craig Friend and Lorri Glover, eds. (University of Georgia Press, 2004), 49-70; Susan Abram, "Real Men: Masculinity, Spirituality, and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Cherokee Warfare," and Tyler Boulware, "We are MEN": Native American and Euroamerican Projections of Masculinity During the Seven Years' War," both in *New Men: Manliness in Early America* Thomas A. Foster, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 93-116 and 70-92, respectively.

towns on Chickamauga Creek, and then further south to the Five Lower Towns (Lookout Mountain, Crow Town, Running Water, Nickajack, and Long Island). Perhaps most importantly, they did not secede from the rest of the Cherokee towns. At the close of the eighteenth century, Cherokee towns still remained mostly autonomous units; therefore, the formation of the Chickamauga towns marked a socially acceptable response to the internal Cherokee dispute over the land cessions, though it also marked a sharp split among Cherokee men over the best way to handle Anglo-American demands for land. Throughout much of the eighteenth century, Cherokee political decisions were made in town councils, and in many cases, action plans required unanimous support. If a council found themselves at loggerheads, they remained so until someone was willing to concede the point.

Anthropologist Fred Gearing coined the term to describe this effort to secure harmony among Cherokee men as the “good man ideal.” According to Gearing, “when contrary interests do become apparent, a good man is expected “quietly (to go) his own way. One does not cease to pursue his own interests. But one takes care not directly to frustrate the actions of others and thereby avoids a confrontation.”⁶ Dragging Canoe and others followed this ideal by going their own way to pursue their interests by forming new Cherokee towns in present-day southeastern Tennessee, northeastern Alabama, and northwestern Georgia in order to remove themselves from the threat of American colonization and retaliation, and to express their displeasure with their accommodationist

⁶ Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors: Social Structures for Cherokee Politics in the 18th Century” *The American Anthropological Association*. Memoir 93 vol. 64, no. 5 (October 1962): 32.

leaders. The older headmen that remained in historic towns also pursued their own course by their continued efforts to achieve lasting peace with white settlers and government officials, while also insisting they did not have control over the actions of Dragging Canoe and other warriors. While many Cherokees remained in historic towns the precedent for Dragging Canoe's actions of physically moving away to avoid disharmony can also be found in Cherokee cosmology.

Historians, most notably Colin Calloway, have noted the generational divide that existed in the formation of the Chickamauga towns and actions of Dragging Canoe and his followers. While there is an obvious difference of opinion between older headmen like Attakullakulla and Oconostota and younger warriors like Dragging Canoe, an explanation of generational differences does not actually tell us very much about the motivations and desires of Dragging Canoe and other Cherokees that resided in the Chickamauga towns. A focus on gender, however, and more specifically masculine ideals and expressions, sheds light on the crux of this generational divide.⁷ Older men were secure in their manhood—their masculinity was achieved in acts of bravery in warfare they participated in when they were younger. As older men, they continued to fulfill their gender roles, and demonstrate their status as men by acting as diplomats.

⁷ Gregory Evans Dowd referred to the formation of the Chickamauga towns as a secessionist movement, and identified the Chickamaugas as a different tribe. See Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 54. Tyler Boulware and Jon Parmenter have argued against this highlighting the fact that the Chickamaugas remained in all ways culturally Cherokee. In addition, they describe the formation of the Chickamauga towns as the only culturally appropriate way to respond to their disagreement with other tribal members regarding land sales and cessions. See: Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2011), 152-55; Jon Parmenter, "Dragging Canoe (Tsi'yu-gunsi'ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot," 124.

Expectations of men in Cherokee society depended greatly on their age. Older men were expected to act as diplomats, and secure peace for their communities. Younger men were expected to go to war and hunt. Thus, establishing a difference of opinion between Cherokee men of dissimilar ages only reaffirms the fact that they acted within the proscribed gendered and generational expectations in Cherokee society. Dragging Canoe is indicative of the temper of the younger generation of warriors. The exact date and location of Dragging Canoe's birth is unknown, but by the 1770s he had established himself as a successful warrior and war leader of Great Island in the Overhill Cherokee region.⁸ Most sources note that Dragging Canoe's father was Attakullakulla, but it is unclear what importance this fact had on Cherokee politics, as Dragging Canoe would not be considered related to Attakullakulla based on matrilineal kinship. Even though Dragging Canoe was younger than Attakullakulla and others who supported peace and land cessions, he was not a man without influence among the Cherokees, and as a war leader he was familiar with oratory and persuasion.⁹

⁸ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 157.

⁹ For mention of Attakullakulla as Dragging Canoe's father see: Gregory Evans Down, *A Spirited Resistance*, 48; Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 58; Robert M. Owen, *Red Dreams, White Nightmares: Pan-Indian Alliances in the Anglo-American Mind, 1763-1815* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015), 64. Owen recognizes the issue of matrilineal kinship, but still asserts that Dragging Canoe "would still have had a relationship with his father." This is not necessarily true. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 44-45. In many cases a relationship between father and son would continue even if the parents were separated, but is certainly no guarantee that this was the case for Attakullakulla and Dragging Canoe. Even though the record states that the two were father and son, there is no mention of any emotional attachment demonstrated toward one another. For more on father and son relationships see: Raymond D. Fogelson, "On the 'Petticoat Government' of the Eighteenth-Century Cherokee," in *Personality and the Cultural Construction of Society*, David K. Jordan and Marc J. Swartz, eds. (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1990), 177-78. According to Fogelson, maternal uncles were the "male mothers" of Cherokee boys. So while fathers were viewed as providers the authority figure in a young man's life was his maternal uncle.

The men of Dragging Canoe's generation found themselves in a position in which both avenues to manhood, hunting and warfare, were becoming increasingly narrow. Gearing argued that the growing prominence of former warriors on town councils was met with some ambivalence by Cherokee society because Cherokees had "mixed feelings" about "warring" because of the rituals involved in warfare such as the fact that returning warriors were expected to maintain distance between themselves and the rest of the town. This line of reasoning appears to run completely counter to the fact that Cherokee society placed onus on men to go to war and avenge the deaths of clan members through violence. The surest way for a Cherokee man to achieve and express his masculinity was through warfare. Thus, because masculine expressions and spiritual expectations dictated that Cherokee men shed blood, the Cherokees incorporated warfare as a necessary component of their culture. Just as menstruating women were secluded from the rest of Cherokee society because they were at their most powerful when handling human blood, so too were returning warriors for the same reasons. Rather than demonstrating "mixed feelings" through their ritual practices, Cherokees demonstrated their respect for the spiritual power of the returning warriors.¹⁰ Warfare was the principal rite of passage for adolescent Cherokee boys to achieve manhood, and as opportunities to go to war declined greater emphasis was placed on hunting as a way to demonstrate masculinity.¹¹

¹⁰ Fred Gearing, "Priests and Warriors," 26, 64-65, 101. For more on the power of blood and the seclusion of warriors and menstruating women see: Raymond Fogelson, "On the Petticoat Government," 173-75.

¹¹ Nathaniel Sheidley, "Hunting and the politics of masculinity in Cherokee treaty-making," 167-85.

As Dragging Canoe indicated in his speech at Sycamore Shoals, they feared that more land sales in treaties would eventually result in the closing of the historic routes to manhood altogether. The loss of land meant the inability of Cherokee men to hunt, which threatened their identity as men. Without adequate land to hunt, men could not demonstrate their ability to provide for a family or to acquire trade goods; therefore, young Cherokee men became less attractive mates to women. While most older headmen desired peace and were willing to cede as much land as necessary to achieve it, Cherokee society had not yet offered viable alternatives to the standard rites of passage for young men. Instead, conciliatory headmen attempted to placate younger warriors with gifts. These elder Cherokees hoped that the distribution of gifts to younger warriors, as status symbols, would discourage them from raiding Euro-American settlers. This solution proved inadequate to men whose masculine ideals were predicated on actively achieving distinction.¹²

The acquisition of gifts did more to demonstrate the power of the elder men, who no longer served as warriors, and instead needed to excel at diplomacy to illustrate their manhood. As Dragging Canoe illustrates in his speech at Sycamore Shoals, “treaties may

¹² Nathaniel Sheidley, “Hunting and the politics of masculinity in Cherokee treaty-making,” 167-85. Jon Parmenter also discusses the generational discord created by land sales in his essay “Dragging Canoe (Tsi’yu-gunsi’ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot.” Tom Hatley offers a different interpretation regarding land sales, from the perspective of elders like Attakullakulla in *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 205-8. According to Hatley, Cherokees ceded lands to traders, including Alexander Cameron and Richard Pearis, that lived among them with their Cherokee wives. Cherokee headmen did this to try and create a buffer zone between their towns and encroaching white settlers.

be all right for men who are too old to hunt or fight.”¹³ Diplomatic efforts and acquisition of gifts was an appropriate avenue for older Cherokee men, but Dragging Canoe and the younger warriors were not yet old; they needed something other than gifts and diplomacy to express their manhood. Questions of Cherokee masculinity lay at the center of these disagreements between younger and older men. Would Cherokee men continue to achieve status for themselves through hunting and war? That was certainly Dragging Canoe’s desire. Or would Cherokee men achieve their manhood through other means? In the late eighteenth century, no viable alternatives had yet arisen.

Disagreements among Cherokees were amplified by the outbreak of war between Britain and its North American colonies. Dragging Canoe complained to Henry Stuart, Deputy Indian Superintendent, in 1776 about the continued loss of Cherokee land. Stuart responded that the Indians themselves were to blame because they had ignored the king’s proclamation to make no private sales. Dragging Canoe stated, “he had no hand in making these Bargains.”¹⁴ He then echoed his statement at Sycamore Shoals, that “some of their Old Men who were too old to hunt” were responsible for these land cessions, but for “his part he had a great many young fellows that would support him and that they were determined to have their land.”¹⁵ Agitation among the Cherokees regarding their land reached a high point at the moment that a Shawnee and Mohawk delegation visited them in the spring of 1776. After the arrival of the delegation “every young Fellow’s face

¹³ Alderman, *Nancy Ward and Dragging Canoe*, 38.

¹⁴ William Saunders, ed. *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, volume X, Raleigh, 1890, 764.

¹⁵ *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, volume X, Raleigh, 1890, 764.

in the Overhills Towns appeared Blackened, and nothing was . . . talked of but War.”¹⁶

As the northward representatives argued for war it was Dragging Canoe who received their belts of wampum.¹⁷

After the large council meeting Dragging Canoe visited Stuart. After a discussion about the upcoming Indian attacks, Stuart chastised Dragging Canoe, and “made him acknowledge himself before all the Chiefs as the sole cause of the war.”¹⁸ Against the wishes of the elders of the tribe and Henry Stuart, Dragging Canoe and his followers heeded the call for attack issued by the delegation from the North. This action by Dragging Canoe and other like-minded warriors further exacerbated tensions among the Cherokees that had been simmering since Dragging Canoe’s speech and exit at Sycamore Shoals approximately a year earlier. On July 1, 1776, Cherokee warriors attacked the borderlands of the Southern colonies. John Stuart, the Indian Superintendent for the Southern Indians, had tried to persuade the Cherokees to use their trade supplies for hunting rather than for attacking backcountry settlements, but his overtures were ignored. Stuart did not want to use Indian allies unless they fought under the supervision and direction of British forces. Dragging Canoe ignored Stuart’s concerns, because they did not mesh with his desires to remove white settlers from Cherokee lands and, by extension, maintain a traditional expression of masculinity.¹⁹

¹⁶ Colonial Records of North Carolina, volume X, 777-79.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 784.

¹⁹ Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country*, 191, 194-95; Hatley, *The Dividing Paths*, 218-19; Parmenter, “Dragging Canoe (Tsi’yu-gunsi’ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot,” 121-22.

Dragging Canoe and his followers continued to fight for their own reasons despite the desires of the elder headmen of their tribe, the British, and the rebelling colonists. After raids began in July 1776, other peace-minded Cherokees attempted to distance themselves from the actions of the younger warriors and pursue their own masculine course, which depended on their ability to use their diplomatic prowess to achieve peace. Nancy Ward, a War Woman, warned traders of Dragging Canoe's intentions to attack white settlements. War women, like Nancy Ward, held a great deal of spiritual power because they possessed the biological power to create life, and because they also participated in war, they demonstrated male spiritual power through the taking of life.²⁰ Women received the designation of War Woman after participating in battle with other Cherokee warriors. Once granted this status, War Women participated in ceremonies to commemorate victories, and they sat apart from other women and children during ceremonial occasions.²¹ While all women typically took part in the torture of captives and made adoption decisions, War Women could save captives from torture despite the wishes of others.²² As a War Woman, Nancy Ward embodied tremendous amounts of

²⁰ See Greg O'Brien, *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age, 1750-1830* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), xxviii-xxix for a discussion of gendered spiritual power, and Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 35-36 on the power and significance of blood. There is also some suggestion that post-menopausal War Women also gained a special status: beloved women. Just as former warriors demonstrated their control over spiritual power by participating in war parties and shedding blood throughout their life, war women displayed an even greater achievement by shedding blood through warfare and menstruation. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 39 and Raymond Fogelson, "On the 'Petticoat Government,'" 174-75. According to Fogelson, post-menopausal women were also tasked with caring for wounded warriors, as they had proven their ability to deal with the dangerous powers that blood represented.

²¹ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 38-39.

²² Nancy Ward rescued Mrs. William Bean, an illegal settler in the Holston River region, from torture and death in 1776, though not another captive taken at the same time. See Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and*

spiritual power, and could use her standing among the Cherokee to save individuals and express her opinions openly.²³

At one treaty talk, after the American Revolution, Nancy Ward addressed the Cherokees and the Americans gathered:

I am fond of hearing that there is a peace, and I hope you have now taken us by the hand in real friendship . . . I look on you and the red people as my children . . . I am old, but I hope yet to bear children, who will grow up and people our nation, as we are now to be under the protection of Congress, and shall have no more disturbance—The talk I have given, is from the young warriors I have raised in my town, as well as myself.²⁴

Nancy Ward utilized her standing as War Women to address both American and Cherokee diplomats directly, with a talk from “the young warriors” from Chota. In this speech, Ward also invoked her feminine spiritual powers as mother and creator of life to frame her preferment of peace. Nancy Ward’s employment of her status War Woman illustrated how gendered power and authority resulted, at times, in different political strategies. Even though gender expectation dictated that Cherokee men engage in diplomacy, their diplomatic goals were often shaped by the influence of Cherokee women, acting in their societal roles as clan and household leaders.

Their Chiefs: In the Wake of Empire (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1998), 61, and Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 53-54.

²³ Even though Nancy Ward held a special standing among the Cherokees, the historical record is replete with examples of Cherokee women involving themselves in matters of peace and war—often subverting the efforts of war parties. See Raymond Fogelson, “On the Petticoat Government,” 167-68.

²⁴ Talks Delivered at the Treaty of Hopewell, November 23, 1785, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I (Washington, DC: Gales and Seaton, 1832), 41.

Even though Nancy Ward was exceptional due to her status as a War Woman, she was not the only woman who attempted to facilitate peace between the Cherokees and the Americans. In the early spring of 1777, Virginia made overtures of peace to the Cherokees. A Cherokee woman was entrusted to deliver the governor's message, and when the Cherokees arrived a number of women were among the party. During the treaty talks "several of their women" warned that Dragging Canoe and his party "a party that lies out; and has refused to come in" planned to "continue the war as formerly."²⁵ Dragging Canoe and his followers embodied the good man ideal because they did not introduce disharmony by entering villages where most elder political leaders and clan leaders (women) disagreed with their conduct. These women's words contradicted the message delivered by the Cherokee men that assured the Virginians that "they could prevail on" Dragging Canoe. They declared that the war leader "sent his Talk with them, and what they agreed to do, he would abide by."²⁶ It is difficult to say exactly why the women and men of this peace delegation were divided in their sentiments, but it is possible that women were performing their societal role as peacekeepers, and the men were engaging in a diplomatic strategy meant to end attacks on Overhill Towns while allowing Dragging Canoe and others the ability to pursue their own course; thereby,

²⁵ Charles Roberston to Governor Caswell, April 27, 1777, *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 11, 459.

²⁶ *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 11, 459.

fulfilling the expectations of the good man ideal through the maintenance of societal harmony.²⁷

In addition to Cherokee women, headmen Attakullakulla and Oconostota continued to pursue their own course according to the good man ideal through their attempts to maintain peace with the Americans. Oconostota also lived in the Overhill Town of Chota, and during the eighteenth century he established himself as a warrior. In the Revolutionary Era, Oconostota was too old to be a war leader, but just like Attakullakulla, Oconostota continued to fulfill gendered expectations through his role as a diplomat.²⁸ In spite of the overtures of peace made by some headmen, in the years of 1776 and 1777, American armies took opportunities to destroy Cherokee villages, with little consideration for whether the inhabitants wanted peace or war. In response to these attacks, it appears that Oconostota reached out to John Stuart for succor. Stuart responded:

You ought not to have thought of taking the Virginians by the hand without having first consulted . . . me. You say you are grown old and that you was obliged to act the part you did, in order to save your Corn—but I think you are very old indeed in your mind as well as Your Body, or else the brave Oucconnastote would never have been induced through fear . . . I thought that the

²⁷ Not all men in this delegation pursued this line. Most notably, Attakullakulla, Dragging Canoe's father, also contradicted the other men by stating in "private conversation" that "the Canoe and his party were fighting . . . a few days before." Charles Robertson to Governor Caswell, April 27, 1777, *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 11, 459. For more discussion on the role of women informants see Raymond Fogelson, "On the Petticoat Government," 167.

²⁸ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 11.

great Warrior of Chote would have died rather than . . . suffer his Towns to be burnt without firing one gun.²⁹

Even though Oconostota was an older man in the 1770s and no longer a warrior, Stuart's upbraiding of Oconostota included gendered elements and essentially questioned the Cherokee headman's manhood. Stuart's attack on Oconostota's masculinity illustrates the requirement that Cherokee society placed on men to continue to express their manhood. John Stuart understood Cherokee culture well as the father of many Cherokee children, and knew that even though Oconostota was no longer expected to act the role of warrior, the headman's status rested on his previous career and success in demonstrating his spiritual power as a warrior.³⁰

Despite the displeasure of the British, Cherokees signed treaties with American colonists, which exchanged land for promises of peace. In May 1777, Cherokees from the Lower, Middle, and Valley Towns signed the Treaty of Dewitts Corner, which ceded Cherokee lands to the United States in present-day South Carolina.³¹ Two months later in July 1777, Overhill Cherokees signed the Treaty of Long Island of Holston, which ceded Cherokee lands in present-day Tennessee. These cessions disrupted the participating

²⁹ John Stuart to Oconostota, Pensacola, February 6, 1777. "The Lost Cherokee Archives," ed. James William Hagy and Stanley James Folmsbee, *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* No. 45, (1973): 91. Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 82.

³⁰ For more discussion of the correlation between success in warfare and diplomacy see Greg O'Brien, *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age*, 32. Even though O'Brien's study focuses on Choctaws, because both the Cherokees and Choctaws were matrilineal societies men and women derived their spiritual power from the same sources. Fred Gearing suggests that the prevalence of former warriors on town councils and in diplomacy began in the middle of the eighteenth century. Fred Gearing, "Priests and Warriors," 101-2.

³¹ Lower Towns were located in present-day South Carolina. Middle Towns were located in present-day southwestern North Carolina. Valley Towns were located west of the Middle Towns in present-day southwestern North Carolina. See Figure 1.

Cherokee regions and resulted in a diaspora of Cherokee people from many ancestral villages. One of the most notable relocations was that of Dragging Canoe and other likeminded Cherokees who did not want to pursue a policy of peace with the Americans. These Cherokees, principally from Overhill towns, moved south and settled on Chickamauga Creek (see Figure 1).³² In this way, the Cherokees that established settlements along Chickamauga Creek were embracing the good man ideal. According to one informant familiar with the political situation in Cherokee regions, Cherokees “were moving, so as to take the situation which best suited their wishes and disposition for war or peace.”³³ By relocating, Dragging Canoe and others were able to pursue their own interests without creating disharmony in the towns and regions in which they formerly resided.

This culturally acceptable solution to the political discord among Cherokee men, however, did not result in an end to American attacks on Cherokee villages. In the years between 1779 and 1782, American militias conducted eight different campaigns against Cherokee towns in all regions. One of these, led by Evan Shelby in 1779, destroyed the eleven towns on Chickamauga Creek. The Cherokees in these towns responded by moving further south to establish five towns along the Tennessee River around present-day Chattanooga, Tennessee: Crow, Lookout Mountain, Long Island, Nickajack, and

³² Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 161-62.

³³ Report of John Boggs to William Blount, September 23, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 293.

Running Water. From these locations, designated as “Lower Towns” (see Figure 1), the Chickamauga warriors continued to attack American settlements.³⁴

Table 1

List of Attacks by American Forces on Cherokee Towns³⁵

Date	Number of towns attacked	Location
1776	80 towns attacked	Lower, Valley, Middle, and Overhill Towns
1779	18 towns attacked	Chickamauga and Valley Towns
1780	23 towns attacked	Valley and Overhill Towns
1781	35 towns attacked	Middle, Valley, and Northwest Georgia Towns
1782	6 towns attacked	Middle and Northwest Georgia Towns
1786	4 towns attacked	Valley and Overhill Towns
1787	4 towns attacked	Middle and Chickamauga Towns
1788	8 towns attacked	Valley and Overhill Towns
1789	1 town attacked	North Alabama
1792	1 town attacked	Northeast Georgia
1793	5 towns attacked	Overhill and Northwest Georgia Towns
1794	2 towns attacked	Chickamauga Towns

Even warriors who did not permanently settle in a Chickamauga town traveled there to participate in raids, and then return to their village in the Overhill region. A

³⁴ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 162-63; Jon Parmenter states that Dragging Canoe and others relocated to the “Five Lowers Towns” in 1782 rather than 1779. See: “Dragging Canoe,” 128-29.

³⁵ These are approximate numbers based upon the reported attacks on behalf of American armies/militias. The above summary is a compilation of information provided by Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 163, and Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 69.

“countryman,” or white man living among the Cherokees, reported, “that many of the young men of every part of the nation, discovered an inclination to join the war party of the Lower towns.”³⁶ Oftentimes, captives were taken in these raids—a continuation of historic practices attendant to clan revenge. Clan revenge dictated that clan members lost by acts of violence must have their “crying blood” quieted, and this was frequently done through the ritual torture and death of a member of the offending clan or Native group.³⁷

Americans frequently requested the return of prisoners during peace negotiations. The difficulty Cherokees had in gathering these captives as articulated by their headmen demonstrated the fact that warriors from throughout the nation took part in raiding settlements: “As for the prisoners, it is impossible to send them to Seneca at this time, because they are scattered through the nation, but they shall be restored to their friends as soon as possible.”³⁸ The distribution of captives throughout Cherokee towns was not the only obstacle in returning captives. Adopted captives replaced lost members of matrilineages. Upon their adoption, whatever identity they possessed before their capture was erased and replaced by the identity of their Cherokee clan. As such, Cherokees viewed and treated these captives as their family; as a result, they evaded American requests when they could. In this way, Chickamauga settlements not only provided an

³⁶ John Christian to Governor Blount, Knoxville, October 5, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 294.

³⁷ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 54.

³⁸ Little Turkey to Winn, October 12, 1788, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 46.

outlet for traditional masculine behavior via war, they also afforded a means to increase population numbers through the ritual adoption of captives.³⁹

The heightened violence experienced by the Cherokees in the Revolutionary era resulted in an increased loss of life and greater need to raid for captives to bolster the population and replace lost loved ones.⁴⁰ Even though women ultimately decided who would be a Cherokee and who would not, the societal need to quench crying blood either through ritual death or adoption meant that men needed to continue to raid for captives. Dragging Canoe's open invitation, then, allowed all Cherokee warriors, regardless of town affiliation, the opportunity to fulfill their gendered responsibility to their clans.

This cross-town participation continued throughout the American Revolution, particularly as a result of further land cessions made in treaties between peace-minded Cherokees and colonial/state governments. The presence of visiting warriors in Chickamauga raiding parties demonstrates the continued importance of warfare to the Cherokee masculine ethos in the late eighteenth century, as well as the continued influence of clan responsibilities and identity.⁴¹ Even those that were not willing to permanently relocate from historic Cherokee regions took advantage of the opportunities provided by the Chickamauga conflict with Americans to achieve manhood in a historically acceptable way—through war. Additionally, by participating in raids on white settlements and taking captives for revenge or adoption, Cherokee men fulfilled

³⁹ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 165-67.

⁴⁰ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 98.

⁴¹ Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee*, 159-68; Parmenter, "Dragging Canoe" (Tsi'yu-gunsi'ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot," 130.

one of their most important responsibilities to their clans. Even though American discussion centered on the number of warriors in Chickamauga towns, men alone did not inhabit these towns. Women, children, and the elderly also resided in Chickamauga towns and performed tasks appropriate to their age and gender. Women in particular fulfilled an important role as the cultivators of corn and other crops, which provided sustenance for the people of their villages and allowed warriors to focus their efforts on warring with Americans.⁴²

The presence of women also demonstrates that decisions to relocate depended on clan identities and household decisions. Women's political power emanated from the household, and as they controlled the corn crop and had inherent spiritual power in their ability to produce food and reproduce the Cherokee people, Cherokee warriors would not have been able to force women to relocate. As the heads of household, women most certainly would have been consulted in such decisions, even if the extant documentary record does not explicitly say so.⁴³ Thus, it is likely that Cherokee women played a decisive role in the formation of Chickamauga towns. Clan affiliations also impacted people's decision to leave Chickamauga towns. One Cherokee warrior, Tuskegetchee originally moved with Dragging Canoe and "Loved War." However, upon the urgings of Joseph Martin, an American Indian agent, "Being his Relation," Tuskegetchee moved from the Chickamauga towns and endeavored to promote peace.⁴⁴ The importance of clan

⁴² Parmenter, "Dragging Canoe" (Tsi'yu-gunsi'ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot," 124-25.

⁴³ Raymond D. Fogelson, "On the "Petticoat Government" of the Eighteenth-Century Cherokee," 172.

⁴⁴ Talk of Tuskegetchee delivered to Colonel Joseph Martin, March 25, 1787. Penelope Johnson Allen Collection, Tennessee State Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

identities in decisions to relocate also sheds light on the frequent presence of out-of-town warriors. Younger, unmarried, Cherokee men looking for opportunities to achieve their manhood had the freedom to travel to Chickamauga towns and return to the homes of their mother, sister, or maternal uncle. The need to consult a wife regarding the relocation of a household was not necessary, and the young warrior could instead focus his efforts on achieving and/or demonstrating his masculinity through the historic practice of warfare.⁴⁵

The possibility of expressing manhood through raids on white settlements was not only attractive to Cherokee warriors. The open invitation of Dragging Canoe and war leaders in other Chickamauga towns attracted Natives from other groups as well. Old Tassel informed Joseph Martin in 1787 that “Northward Indians & Creeks” planned to strike Americans and wanted the Cherokees to join them. Old Tassel desired to “Sit Still,” but the Chickamaugas desired “to take Satisfaction for some of their friends killed by the Kentucky people.”⁴⁶ Old Tassel or *Koatohee* (also referred to as Corn Tassel and The Tassel), was a Cherokee headman from Toqua, an Overhill Town located in present-day eastern Tennessee, who frequently called for peace between the Cherokees and the

⁴⁵ Teenage Cherokee boys often left their mother’s household to reside with their maternal uncles. It was during this time that uncles imparted knowledge on their nephews and prepared them to become men. For more on this see: Raymond D. Fogelson, “On the “Petticoat Government” of the Eighteenth-Century Cherokee,” 177-78.

⁴⁶ Talk of Tassel delivered to Colonel Joseph Martin, March 25, 1787. Penelope Johnson Allen Collection, microfilm 815, Tennessee State Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Americans.⁴⁷ In fact, Old Tassel and other Cherokee headmen inclined toward peace repeatedly separated the Chickamaugas out in their conversations with American officials.

While Americans called for headmen to discipline younger warriors, Cherokee society lacked a mechanism for such punishment. Ultimately, Cherokee men made individual decisions to engage in warfare. War leaders as well as men inclined toward peace had a responsibility to persuade men to go along with their wishes, but they could not force a Cherokee man to follow directives for war or peace. Territorial Governor William Blount complained of the nature of Cherokee warfare and its connection to individual manhood, “all national honors are acquired by the shedding of blood.”⁴⁸ Blount also demonstrated his understanding of the inability of older men to retrain younger warriors, when in his complaint he noted, “all the chiefs . . . can neither restrain nor punish the most worthless fellow . . . for a violation of the existing treaties.”⁴⁹ To explain this fact Blount relied on the importance of clan and clan responsibilities:

Every Indian nation is divided into families or clans; and it is a law among them, that each clan shall protect and take satisfaction for all injuries offered to the person of each individual of it, whatever his offences may be . . . if the injured clan, or any of its members, take satisfaction, it is well, and the matter ends.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Toqua is located in present-day Monroe County, Tennessee in the southeastern portion of the state. Monroe County is approximately 96 miles west of present-day Cherokee, NC. Tassel’s town affiliation is listed as Toqua next to his signature on the Treaty of Hopewell, signed in 1785.

⁴⁸ Governor Blount to the Secretary of War, Knoxville, November 8, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, 325.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

In this situation, retaliatory violence continued as men fulfilled their responsibilities as clan members to avenge the deaths of their kin.⁵¹

In January 1779, Americans planned an attack on the Cherokees in the Chickamauga towns. Virginia's Indian agent, Joseph Martin, assured the governor that the attack would not "endanger" efforts to secure peace with the rest of the Cherokees, "but will strengthen it."⁵² Martin informed the governor, "the leading Men are much exasperated at the Conduct of the Seceders at & about Chickamogga who perpetually embroil their public Council, and, by repeated violence . . . attempt to involve the nation at large in . . . war."⁵³ According to Martin, the older headmen hoped that the attack would force the Cherokees residing in Chickamauga towns "to return to the old Towns."⁵⁴ Joseph Martin was also the husband of Betsy Ward, Nancy Ward's daughter; therefore, it is likely that he was well acquainted with the opinions of the War Woman of Chota and other peace-minded headmen in Chota and other Overhill towns.

A similar sentiment was also expressed by Old Tassel when he reported to Joseph Martin that he "had talked to them [the Chickamaugas] until he found it was of no use; that he with other chiefs, advised and thought it best to go against them and burn their towns, by which means they would return to their allegiances, that then they would have

⁵¹ Fred Gearing, "Priests and Warriors," 21.

⁵² Patrick Henry to Richard Caswell, January 18, 1779, *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 14, 245.

⁵³ *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 14, 245.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

it in their power to govern them.”⁵⁵ In this way, Old Tassel and peace-minded headmen did not directly frustrate the efforts of Dragging Canoe, per the dictates of the good man ideal. Old Tassel and other conciliatory headmen realized that Dragging Canoe and others were demonstrating a different way of life and a different identity for the Cherokee people in their Chickamauga or Lower Towns. Even so, Old Tassel and others also strove to influence Cherokees to adopt their visions for a peaceful future coexisting among American settlers, and even if they were willing to follow historic dictates by allowing Dragging Canoe and others to go their own way unmolested, the contest between the two visions was real as Old Tassel’s encouragement of American officials demonstrates. By employing the good man ideal, Dragging Canoe and others provided Cherokees throughout the various regions with a choice to move and engage in historic gendered practices, or remain and commit to a yet undetermined path forged by headmen desirous for peace and willing to cede lands necessary to attain it. Old Tassel hoped to demonstrate how dangerous and hopeless such a proposition was. Men like Dragging Canoe and Old Tassel both hoped to unite the Cherokees together under their vision for a Cherokee future, but the two men differed greatly in their strategies for unification.⁵⁶

Before Old Tassel and other Overhill headmen began calling for Americans to use violent force against their countrymen they often expressed their inability to control the actions of those residing farther south in Chickamauga towns. It is difficult to say with

⁵⁵ Joseph Martin to Henry Knox, Fort Patrick Henry, February 2?, 1789, *Papers of Panton, Leslie, and Company*, Accessed May 6, 2015.

⁵⁶ Parmenter, “Dragging Canoe” (Tsi’yu-gunsi’ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot,” 124.

certainty, but it appears that Cherokee men employed a diplomatic stratagem that allowed them to condemn the actions of their younger warriors to American officials, while also allowing the Chickamauga towns to provide a staging area for young men to engage in historic rites of passage. According to one Cherokee man:

the head-men of the other towns sent talks to the five Lower towns, not to go so soon to war; their corn was not yet ripe; that the white people would come and destroy it and their towns, and they would not be able to stand hunger and cold both at the same time.⁵⁷

This report suggests that there was some acceptance on the part of conciliatory headmen for the purpose and goals of the Chickamaugas.⁵⁸

Headmen who supported peace frequently complained of their inability to control their young men, a convenient, yet real, excuse. After meeting in council, headmen informed President George Washington, “troubles have been occasioned by our rash inconsiderate young men.”⁵⁹ Conciliatory headmen did have difficulties influencing younger warriors to follow their directives, but in this way, men of both generations performed their required societal roles. Older men were expected to demonstrate their manhood through their ability to navigate diplomatic situations, and in the late eighteenth

⁵⁷ Report by Red Bird to Major Craig, September 13, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 282.

⁵⁸ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 167-68.

⁵⁹ Tickagiska King to his Excellency the President of the United States, “a great talk held by the warriors and chiefs of the Cherokee nation, assembled in council at the great and beloved town of Chota,” May 19, 1789, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 57.

century, the surest way for a younger warrior to earn and express their masculinity was through warfare.⁶⁰

Even as young warriors continued to ignore the council of Over Hill headmen these men continued in their gendered occupations as diplomats in efforts to stop the bloodshed. Old Tassel, despite multiple American attacks on Cherokee towns and empty promises by government officials, continued to strive for peace. Old Tassel was the principal signer on the Treaty of Hopewell in 1785, an agreement in which the Cherokees placed themselves under the protection of the United States, and the government vowed to prevent white settlement beyond the agreed upon borders.⁶¹ By 1787, however, this promise remained unfulfilled and settlers continued to establish homesteads on Cherokee lands. Old Tassel petitioned the government, “You have often promised me in Talks that you Sent me that you would do me Justice . . . I therefore Beg that our Elder Brother Will have your Disorderly people taken off our Land immediately.” Old Tassel complained that the presence of settlers caused tension among the Cherokees and he expressed his concern regarding the possibilities. The headman also invoked spiritual language to persuade his audience: “we were all made by the Same great Being above we are the

⁶⁰ Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors,” 61-63, and Greg O’Brien, *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age*, 30-32.

⁶¹ The Treaty of Hopewell ceded Cherokee lands in present-day eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina. In exchange for this cession the government promised that any American that settled south or west of the established boundary “shall forfeit the protection of the United States, and the Indians may punish him or not as they please.” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904).

Children of the Same parents Therefore [I] hope my Brother will hear me.”⁶² Old Tassel’s talk attempted to establish a shared identity between the Cherokees and Americans. He hoped that government officials would recognize their mutual cause to maintain peace, thereby ensuring his vision for a Cherokee future.⁶³

Unfortunately, government officials did nothing to stop the advance of white settlers and violence resulted. In 1788, Colonel John Sevier, future governor of Tennessee, led a group of white settlers to attack Cherokee towns and force the Cherokees to abandon towns east of the Cumberland Mountains. The actions of Sevier and his men resulted in the burning or evacuation of Big Island, Chilhowie, Chota, Coyatee, Hiwassee, Settico, Talassee, and Tellico. According to a Cherokee spokesperson, “flourishing fields of corn and pulse [peas or beans] were destroyed and laid waste; some of their wives and children were burnt alive in their town houses.”⁶⁴ Angered by the attacks on Cherokee towns and continued settler encroachment a group of Cherokees attacked a family living beyond the agreed-upon boundary, while the father and one son were away. All eleven members of the Kirk family present were killed. In response, Americans arrived at Old Tassel’s home requesting his presence at a council with other headmen in Chilhowie. As Old Tassel and his son approached Chilhowie, the Americans raised a white flag. At Chilhowie, “decoyed, unarmed . . . by repeated

⁶² Old Tassel for himself & Whole Nation in presence of the headmen of the Upper & Lower Cherokees to the Governor of Virginia and North Carolina, 1787. Penelope Johnson Allen Collection, microfilm 815, Tennessee State Archives, Nashville, Tennessee

⁶³ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 68-71.

⁶⁴ The Memorial of Bennett Ballew to the President of the United States, New York, August 22, 1789, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 56.

declarations of friendship and kindness,” American militiamen barred all exits, and John Kirk killed the headmen, one by one, with a hatchet in 1788.⁶⁵

According to reports, Old Tassel did not attempt to flee but accepted his fate with courage, fulfilling societal expectations of a masculine death. Cherokee men were expected to demonstrate bravery by accepting death and torture. Historically, when enemy warriors were brought back to Cherokee villages they were subjected to torture at the hands of women, who had a responsibility as clan leaders to take revenge for the loss of a family member. Warriors were often tortured for days, and were revived with cold water if they passed out from the pain. Throughout this ordeal enemy warriors were expected to remain stoic, recounting the numbers of Cherokees they killed to their tormentors. Those that cried out in pain or begged for mercy proved their lack of masculinity and were executed. This type of courage in the face of death was a historic expectation of masculinity and one familiar to Old Tassel. Even though he avoided torture, his quiet acceptance of his fate followed accepted Cherokee expressions of manhood.⁶⁶

Cherokee warriors throughout the nation responded to the murder of their headmen violently. John Watts’s (*Kunoskeskie* or Little Tassel) reaction to the death of his maternal uncle, Old Tassel demonstrates the impact that clan ties had on men’s decisions to engage in attacks on American settlements. During an attempt to achieve

⁶⁵ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 165; Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 71-72.

⁶⁶ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 53.

another cession of land from the Cherokees Watts complained to the governor that the people of North Carolina were

headstrong, and that they had under the sanction of a flag of truce, laid his uncle, *The Old Corn Tassel*, low; it was therefore in vain to contend about a line at this time, as he knew that they would have their own way, and that they would not observe the orders of Congress or any body else.⁶⁷

Watts then confided to his counterpart “that the death of his uncle so affected him, that he could not speak any more, and desired me to finish the business.”⁶⁸ According to clan responsibilities, John Watts had a responsibility to seek revenge for the death of his uncle. Old Tassel’s status at the time of his death, as well as the success of John Watts as a war leader meant that government officials were familiar with this particular case of clan law motivation. It is impossible to say, however, how many individual warriors might have been encouraged similarly by the death of kin. In light of the frequent attacks on Cherokee towns by Sevier and others throughout the Revolutionary era, it seems likely that clan responsibilities to avenge murders provided motivations for warriors throughout the nation.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Bloody Fellow to the Secretary of War, Saturday, June 7, 1792, Philadelphia, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 204.

⁶⁸ Bloody Fellow to Secretary of War, January 7, 1792, Philadelphia, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 204. After Watts retired Blount continued his point with Bloody Fellow stating “the Americans had driven the English out of the country, and that the land had been purchased with American blood.” Bloody Fellow responded “that, although it was true the English were driven from the country, they had come a great way to fight the Americans, and that the Americans had been assisted in this war by the French; that no good purpose could be answered by bringing them up now, and therefore such things ought to be buried forever.”

⁶⁹ Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors,” 21; Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 52-53.

Even though Watts had a responsibility to respond to the death of his uncle, the fact that Americans “massacred in cold blood”⁷⁰ a headman so committed to peace led Cherokees from all regions to join the Chickamaugas in attacks on American settlements.⁷¹ From the beginning of hostilities in 1776, Overhill Town leaders consistently pursued peace and attempted to convince younger warriors to practice patience and restraint, but after the death of Old Tassel, “The Overhills . . . seem[ed] determined for war.”⁷² Overhill warriors were not the only ones to respond. In the fall of 1788, headmen from the Middle Towns ended their trip to meet in council with their counterparts from other regions to return to their towns “fearing that some of their young men might go out again and do mischief.”⁷³ The Cherokees experienced the greatest unification in war in the months following Old Tassel’s death.⁷⁴ In spite of the response on the behalf of the younger warriors, many Cherokee headmen attempted to put an end to the violence but often found their efforts frustrated by war leaders and encouragement from non-Cherokee Natives. In November 1788, “400 Creek Indians . . . were joined by 1200 Cherokees,” and together they struck American settlements, attacked a fort, and

⁷⁰ The Memorial of Bennett Ballew to the President of the United States, New York, August 22, 1789, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 56.

⁷¹ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 165-68; Jon Parmenter, “Dragging Canoe,” 130-31.

⁷² Richard Winn to Henry Knox, Winnsborough, August 5, 1788, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 28.

⁷³ A talk from the head-men and warriors of the Cherokee nation, at a meeting held at Ustinaire, the beloved town to Richard Winn, November 20, 1788. Middle Towns were located in present-day southwestern North Carolina. *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 46.

⁷⁴ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 165.

took twenty-eight prisoners.⁷⁵ The death of Old Tassel proved a great motivation for warriors throughout Cherokee regions, but the participation of the Creeks also reveals another important aspect of late eighteenth-century Cherokee masculinity in Chickamauga towns: its incorporation of a Pan-Indian diplomacy.⁷⁶

Diplomacy was a historic expression of Cherokee manhood throughout the eighteenth century. Cherokee society, expected older men, to engage in diplomacy. During the eighteenth century, an evolution of diplomatic expectations among Cherokee men occurred, as councils were increasingly made up of former warriors and war leaders. These men already held the respect of their towns and regions through their previous careers as successful warriors. Serving as a war leader provided Cherokee men the opportunity to hone their oratory skills, and success on the battlefield provided evidence for these men's spiritual power. Through taking life, warriors and war leaders most clearly demonstrated their male spiritual prowess. After the middle of the eighteenth century, it was atypical for a Cherokee man to become a beloved man without first demonstrating his masculinity earlier in his life as a warrior and then war leader. The Chickamauga or Lower Towns marked another turning point in Cherokee history as war leaders also took on the diplomatic roles historically reserved for older men. Men like Dragging Canoe, John Watts, and Bloody Fellow worked tirelessly toward a Pan-Indian

⁷⁵ Joseph Martin to Henry Knox, Long Island, Holston River, January 15, 1789, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, 47.

⁷⁶ Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 59-60. According to Dowd the Cherokees and the Shawnees were the most active in establishing an eighteenth-century Pan-Indian alliance. This alliance was at its strongest between 1779 and 1794. Robert M. Owens echoes this argument in *Red Dreams, White Nightmares: Pan-Indian Alliances in the Anglo-American Mind, 1763-1815* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015), 76-77.

alliance, and when not engaged in Native-to-Native diplomacy, these men led groups of warriors to attack American settlements.⁷⁷

Even though Dragging Canoe refused to attend treaty and peace negotiations with Americans, he actively engaged in diplomacy with other Indian groups, the British, and the Spanish. As early as 1779, Cherokees were present in Detroit and received “belts from the five Nations [Iroquois]” for themselves and the Choctaws. These Cherokees were also “charged with more belts” that they were entrusted to deliver to other southern Indian nations.⁷⁸ In 1781 Cherokee representatives were back in Detroit with “a Deputation of Principal Chiefs” representing the Shawnees and Delawares.⁷⁹ The Cherokee spokesperson at this council stated his “business with the Shawanese (amongst whom I reside at present) is to support the general League of Friendship between you and your Indian Children.”⁸⁰ This headmen’s speech demonstrates the early efforts of the Cherokees to initiate an alliance between Natives in eastern North America supported by the British. His reference to residing in a Shawnee town indicated the relationship that the two groups had established with each other. The historical narrative holds many examples of the exchange of emissaries to reside in different nations to solidify efforts to

⁷⁷ Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors,” 26, 64-65, 101.

⁷⁸ Major De Peyster to Captain McKee, Detroit, November 2, 1779, *Collections and Researches made by the Pioneer and Historical Society of the State of Michigan*, Vol. X (Lansing: Thorp & Godfrey, State Printers and Binders, 1888), 371.

⁷⁹ Council held at Detroit, April 5, 1781, *Collections and Researches made by the Pioneer and Historical Society of the State of Michigan*, Vol. X, 462.

⁸⁰ *Collections and Researches made by the Pioneer and Historical Society of the State of Michigan*, Vol. X, 464.

maintain peace and facilitate diplomatic efforts between the groups.⁸¹ This Cherokee residing among the Shawnees performed a historic diplomatic role of southeastern Native men to promote inter-tribal cooperation to resist colonial subjugation.

During the late eighteenth century, the connections between the Cherokees and the Shawnees continued, and larger numbers of Cherokees, along with a group of Creek Indians resided in Shawnee towns. A number of Shawnees were also reported as residents in Running Water, a Chickamauga or Lower Town in the 1790s.⁸² The Lower Towns were located close to John McDonald, a former British agent with trade connections to the Panton Leslie Company in Spanish Pensacola. The Chickamaugas relied on McDonald and his connections to acquire weapons, and in 1784 Dragging Canoe obtained weapons directly from a Spanish agent.⁸³ In 1785, Joseph Martin reported that the Cherokees, specifically the Chickamaugas, and their allies were engaged in talks with the Spanish. In addition to encouragement from the Spanish, Martin complained “Two Wyandot chiefs are now in Chickamogga . . . who tell these Indians that all the different

⁸¹ Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 59. Dowd notes that the Cherokees and Shawnees “exchanged delegations—they might be thought of as consulates—in order to further understanding and cooperation.” Another notable example of the exchange of “consulates” occurred in the 1750s between the Cherokees and the Creeks. In order to foster and maintain peace with one another during a period of war the Creek town of Okfuskee sent a delegate to the Cherokee town of Estatoe, and the Estatoes sent someone to Okfuskee. For more on the Okfuskee-Estatoe exchange see: Joshua Piker, *The Four Deaths of Acorn Whistler: Telling Stories in Colonial America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 160-61. These delegate exchanges were attended with various rituals, including adoption. The ritual adoption of these individuals speaks to the active role that women sometimes played in Native politics.

⁸² Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 55; Robert M. Owens, *Red Dreams, White Nightmares*, 87 & 92-93. According to Owens the Cherokees and Shawnees were so frequently in each other’s towns that they were seen as one and the same.

⁸³ Joseph Martin to Richard Caswell, September 19, 1785, *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 17, 521; Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 54; Robert M. Owens, *Red Dreams, White Nightmares*, 98; Jon Parmenter, “Dragging Canoe,” 130-31.

Tribes of Indians will turn out to war this fall.”⁸⁴ The Cherokees and Shawnees continued to solidify connections between Native nations throughout eastern North America as demonstrated in the presence of the Wyandot headmen, as well as their inclusion in a “confederacy” that sought to establish guidelines for land cessions with American representatives in 1786. The multiple nations comprising this confederacy gathered at Detroit declared:

To maintain peace . . . all treaties carried on with the United States, on our parts, should be the general voice of the whole confederacy, and carried on in the most open manner, without any restraint on either side; and especially as landed matters are often the subject of our council with you, a matter of the greatest importance and of general concern to us . . . any cession of our lands should be made in the most public manner, and by the united voice of the confederacy; holding all partial treaties as void and of no effect.⁸⁵

The solidarity demonstrated by the Cherokees and others gathered at Detroit was exceptional in American Indian history, and illustrates the success achieved by Cherokee diplomats who devoted their masculine powers of diplomacy to create Pan-Indian unity.

While Cherokee men acted in diplomatic concert with the Shawnees, allies from Creek towns increasingly attended Chickamauga attacks on American settlements. The Spanish articulated their expectations for an alliance between the Cherokees, Creeks, and Chickasaws. In 1786, a Spanish reported the “Talapoosa [Creeks], Cherokee, and

⁸⁴ Joseph Martin to Richard Caswell, September 19, 1785, *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 17, 521.

⁸⁵ Speech of the United Nations, at their Confederate Council, Present – The Five Nations, the Hurons, Delawares, Shawanese, Ottawas, Chippewas, Powtewattimies, Twichtwees, Cherokees, and the Wabash confederates, held near the mouth of the Detroit River, November 28th & December 18, 1786. *American State Papers: Indians Affairs*, Vol. I, 8.

Chickasaw” are firmly attached to the Spanish and “are forming a powerful league” against the Americans.⁸⁶ The Chickasaws, however, proved divided in their support for a Pan-Indian alliance against the Americans. Advocates for such an alliance were not easily deterred and reacted violently toward Chickasaws unwilling to join in the common cause. In the summer of 1787, Spanish reports indicated that Chickasaws who refused to participate in a Pan-Indian alliance “may now have been destroyed by the confederated league just formed by the Talapoosas [Creeks], to whom he had carried the collar, in conjunction with the other half of the Chickasaws, the Shawnees, Lobos, Cherokees and Abenauis.”⁸⁷ Spain’s involvement in a “defensive alliance” between the Creeks, Cherokees, Choctaws, and Chickasaws continued throughout the late 1780s and early 1790s.⁸⁸ As the example of the Chickasaws demonstrates, nativists in the late eighteenth century had to contend with others who wished to protect themselves through the historically accepted diplomatic practice of Native-European alliances.⁸⁹

Those opposed to a Pan-Indian alliance wanted to continue the successful diplomatic strategies of the past and hoped they could play the British, Spanish, and Americans off of one another. But Pan-Indian proponents and nativists like Dragging

⁸⁶ Estevan Miro to Don Francisco Cruzat, New Orleans, March 5, 1786, *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Vol. III, ed. Lawrence Kinnaird (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), 170.

⁸⁷ Carlos de Grand-Pre to Don Estevan Miro, June 1, 1787, Natchez, *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Volume III, 210. Kathleen DuVal also notes that Cherokees and Creeks attacked and harassed Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Cherokees that treated with Americans. See Kathleen DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015), 307.

⁸⁸ Baron de Carondelet to Don Pedro Olivier, March 30, 1792, New Orleans, *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Volume IV, ed. Lawrence Kinnaird (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), 21.

⁸⁹ Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 16.

Canoe and others from the Chickamauga towns realized that power dynamics in North America were changing and sought to develop new strategies to combat colonialism. Oftentimes this included war. Indeed, residents of the Chickamauga or Lower Towns are often considered militant Cherokees. But even as they warred with Americans, Chickamauga leaders engaged in intense diplomatic efforts with other Native groups in the hopes that a Pan-Indian alliance would be decisive in checking American colonialism. Cherokee men utilized warfare, which was one expression of manhood, to protect the second masculine pursuit of hunting. A Pan-Indian alliance was crucial for Dragging Canoe and others from the Chickamauga towns as they attempted to persuade Cherokees throughout the nation to embrace their vision for Cherokee society and identity. This vision was predicated on a continuation of historic gender ideals and also incorporated a warrior-diplomat identity into Cherokee manhood. This particular vision contrasted with that of older conciliatory headmen that offered no new solutions for the impending gender crisis, and argued that Cherokee life could continue despite the continued cessions of land. Leaders from Chickamauga and historic towns sought ways to convince the Cherokee people to embrace their societal ideal that allowed the continuation of traditional notions of masculinity.

A successful alliance among Native peoples became a central feature of Chickamauga men's evolving Cherokee masculine ideal. Agreeing with conciliatory headmen that the Cherokees could not defeat the Americans, Chickamaugas poured their diplomatic energies into securing a Pan-Indian alliance that could be used as a decisive

check on American colonialism. Chickamaugas demonstrated their commitment to an alliance among Natives again in 1791, when they participated with the Miami-led intertribal confederacy in the defeat of U.S. General Arthur St. Clair at the Battle of Kekionga near present-day Fort Wayne, Indiana.⁹⁰ According to the Cherokees, sixty Indians from Chickamauga towns participated in the Battle of Kekionga and returned “with several scalps and a great deal of plunder.”⁹¹ White Owl’s Son, a resident of Running Water (a Lower Town) and Dragging Canoe’s brother, reported that while participating with other Natives at the Battle of Kekionga he also received various presents from the British “for the use of himself and his brother.” These items included, among other things, two pairs of arm bands, “three gorgets for his brother and four for himself,” scarlet boots for both men, “four match coats, a blanket, and two shirts for each, and powder and lead.”⁹² In addition to gifts that demonstrated the status of the two men, White Owl’s Son also distinguished himself during the battle by killing “an officer.”⁹³ In addition to the Cherokees, St. Clair faced warriors from diverse nations including: Chippewas, Delawares, Miamis, Mingos, Ottawas, Potawatomis, Shawnees, and

⁹⁰ Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 165-167; Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country*, 210-11; Parmenter, “Dragging Canoe” (Tsi’yu-gunsi’ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot,” 130-31.

⁹¹ Arthur Campbell to the Governor of Virginia, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, Vol. V, 480. Cherokee interpreter, James Carey, reported “there were about thirty Cherokees in the action against General St. Clair, from different parts of the nation, not confined to the Lower Towns. “Minutes of information given Governor Blount by James Carey, one of the interpreters of the United States, in the Cherokee Nation,” Knoxville, November 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, 329.

⁹² “Minutes of information given Governor Blount by James Carey, one of the interpreters of the United States, in the Cherokee Nation,” Knoxville, November 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, 327.

⁹³ *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, 328. For a discussion on the importance of gifts as status symbols for warriors see: Greg O’Brien, “Trying to Look Like Men: Changing Notions of Masculinity Among Choctaw Elites in the Early Republic.”

Wyandots. This concerted action revealed the successes of Pan-Indian diplomacy and the Cherokee men who participated in it.

A year later, Cherokees were again among a diverse body of Native representatives including all of those they fought with the previous year along with Hurons, “Munseys, Connoys, Nantikokes, Mohikens,” Creeks, Iroquois, and the “7 Nations of Canada,” “Saks,” “Reynards, & a few Ouitanons.” At this Indian council in present-day northwestern Ohio, Shawnee and Miami headmen conducted ceremonies. Those gathered were addressed as “Brothers,” “Uncles,” and “Nephews.” The language employed demonstrated the importance of Native kin networks, and reflected Native power hierarchies embraced by the all-Native audience.⁹⁴ The Cherokees and Creeks present at this council were charged to return to their towns with the speeches delivered. The council’s “great pleasure” at the presence of the Cherokees and Creeks demonstrates their importance to Pan-Indian efforts. To solidify the Native “union” a “large Belt” was presented, and a representative of the Canadian Nations vowed to work in concert “to take care of” the southern Natives’ towns, women, and children.⁹⁵ The successes achieved in council and against St. Clair bolstered Dragging Canoe’s status as a warrior-diplomat. In the 1790s, Dragging Canoe and other Chickamauga leaders focused their efforts on solidifying a southeastern alliance subsidized by the Spanish to further their

⁹⁴ Indian Council at the Glaize, September 30, 1792, *The Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, with Allied Documents relating to His Administration of the Government of Upper Canada*, Collected and Edited by Brigadier General E.A. Cruishank, L.L.D., F.R.S.C for the Ontario Historical Society, Volume I, 1789-1793 (Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1923), 218. Even though these Natives hoped for British support, the Indians’ words were for each other. The language is significant because the Natives have omitted the prominent “father” identifier that they employ with Euro-Americans.

⁹⁵ Indian Council at the Glaize, October 4, 1792, 223.

vision of a Cherokee society predicated on historic gender roles and defended by a shared Pan-Indian masculine ethos.⁹⁶

Dragging Canoe and other Lower Town leaders did not strive to centralize authority in the Cherokee nation. In the Revolutionary era, governance in Chickamauga towns followed historic structures in which town councils made decisions based on consensus. Even though Dragging Canoe is the most well-known Chickamauga, he was not the “principal chief” of all Lower Towns. Such designations did not emerge until after Dragging Canoe’s death in 1792. He was a charismatic war leader who inspired many men, primarily among the war leaders of the Lower Towns, but his identity was attached to Running Water, the Lower Town in which he resided.⁹⁷ Cherokee politics at the time (especially in the Lower Towns) was predicated on the good man ideal. The good man ideal dictated that men pursue their own interests in support of their clans and community—coercion risked disharmony.⁹⁸

Further evidence of the diffused, rather than centralized nature of Chickamauga political power is the fact that diplomacy with other Natives and the Spanish continued after the death of Dragging Canoe in 1792. According to Cherokee interpreter James Carey, after Dragging Canoe’s death a council of headmen at Estanaula selected White Owl’s Son to “succeed” his brother. In response to this call, White Owl’s Son arrived at

⁹⁶ Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 165-67; Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country*, 210-11; Parmenter, “Dragging Canoe” (Tsi’yu-gunsi’ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot,” 130-31.

⁹⁷ Other headmen from Lower Towns included The Glass, Bloody Fellow, Dick Justice, John Watts, Doublehead, Tahlonteskee, and Breath, among others.

⁹⁸ Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 165.

Estanaula to collect a “war pipe which he had brought from Detroit.”⁹⁹ Before Dragging Canoe’s death in the winter of 1791/1792, King Fisher (*Chutlob*) and other Chickamaugas met with United States government officials in Philadelphia. To demonstrate the peace that King Fisher and others achieved with the Americans, he (along with another headman) destroyed the pipe upon his return from Philadelphia. Demonstrating the inability of one man to make such decisions, White Owl’s Son criticized the actions of King Fisher and “requested [that] his talks should be considered as a little boy’s and not as the talks of a man and a warrior.”¹⁰⁰ He then ordered the creation of a pipe to replicate the one destroyed.¹⁰¹ King Fisher overstepped his authority when he destroyed the pipe and disregarded the directions of the good man ideal to avoid making decisions for others.¹⁰²

Cherokee diplomatic protocol did not yet bar King Fisher and others from discussing peace with the Americans, but their course of action was not permitted to

⁹⁹ “Minutes of information given Governor Blount by James Carey, one of the interpreters of the United States, in the Cherokee Nation,” Knoxville, November, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 327. In another account, Blount refers to a “war hatchet” rather than a “war pipe.” Carey does not correct him, but both accounts referred to the same item, whether it was a hatchet or pipe. In the second account, King Fishers is credited with destroying the item, and a replacement is commissioned. White Owl’s Son, however, is not mentioned, and instead, the arrival of a Shawnee delegation prompts the creation the replacement. In both cases, great effort was taken to make the replacement as much like the destroyed item. According to Carey’s second account, the Cherokees kept the replica hatchet at Running Water to present to the Shawnee “ambassadors” when they arrived “as an evidence of their disposition to join them in the war.” See “Information by James Carey, one of the interpreters of the United States in the Cherokee Nation, to Governor Blount,” Knoxville, March 20, 1793, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 439. James Carey, the Cherokee interpreter, was captured and adopted into Cherokee society when he was a boy and raised by the headman Little Turkey. See Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 75.

¹⁰⁰ “Minutes of information given Governor Blount by James Carey, one of the interpreters of the United States, in the Cherokee Nation,” Knoxville, November, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 327.

¹⁰¹ *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 327.

¹⁰² Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors,” 31.

infringe on others. White Owl's Son illustrated the impropriety of King Fisher's actions by attacking the headman's manhood. King Fisher did not deserve the respect due to a "man and warrior" because he attempted to influence Cherokee diplomacy through the literal and symbolic destruction of other diplomatic options. The war pipe was an important diplomatic symbol of the Pan-Indian efforts of the Cherokees, and while King Fisher could choose not to participate, he could not blatantly undermine those diplomatic efforts. In his anger, White Owl's Son declared that if King Fisher were present, "he would destroy the medal that had been given him at Philadelphia."¹⁰³ The pipe and medal were different but equally significant in their diplomatic symbolism and their representation of two competing Cherokee foreign policies, one symbolizing promises for war and the other promises for peace. Cherokee men had an individual choice, but attempting to make major diplomatic decisions without the explicit support of other Cherokees ignored the good man ideal and brought one's manhood into question.

As the incident with White Owl and King Fisher demonstrated the Cherokees were not unified behind one foreign policy in the early 1790s. King Fisher's trip to Philadelphia was actually initiated to complain about the Treaty of Holston. In June/July 1791, a group of Cherokee headmen met with Governor Blount to persuade the government to remove settlers that were on Cherokee lands in violation of previous treaty agreements. Blount had no intention of removing the settlers, but instead hoped to gain

¹⁰³ "Minutes of information given Governor Blount by James Carey, one of the interpreters of the United States, in the Cherokee Nation," Knoxville, November, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 327.

title to the land they occupied. Among other things, the treaty granted another sizable land cession in present-day eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina in exchange for a thousand-dollar annuity. The Treaty of Holston also represented the federal government's first efforts to institute a "civilization" policy among the Cherokees, which would have a tremendous impact on Cherokee society in the nineteenth century. Most notable Cherokee headmen, including several from Chickamauga towns (excluding Dragging Canoe), signed the treaty. Reconsidering their annuity amount, a group of signers traveled to Philadelphia to try negotiate a better deal. In addition to King Fisher, this delegation included Bloody Fellow, The Northward, The Prince, Tahlonteskee, and George Miller (also known as *Suaka*).¹⁰⁴

The delegation arrived at the United States capital on December 29, 1791. On Thursday, January 5, 1792 Bloody Fellow gave the Secretary of War two silver medals and stated, "These medals were presented by Colonel Martin, about four or five years ago, but as some disturbances have since happened, they are now returned, to obtain others from the United States. Medals are valuable to the Cherokees, and when accompanied with speeches, are monuments of friendship to their nation."¹⁰⁵ The President returned the gesture by giving Bloody Fellow

¹⁰⁴ Treaty of Holston "Treaty with the Cherokee 1791, July 2, 1791," *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904). Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 74-75. Article Fourteen states: "That the Cherokee nation may be led to a greater degree of civilization, and to become herdsmen and cultivators, instead of remaining in a state of hunters, the United States will from time to time furnish gratuitously the said nation with useful implements of husbandry, and further to assist the said nation in so desirable a pursuit."

¹⁰⁵ Bloody Fellow to the Secretary of War, January 5, 1792, Philadelphia, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 203.

an uncommon large Medal: on one side are the effigies of the President & the bloody Fellow—The President is seen to hold the Pipe of Peace, while the Bloody fellow smoaks, each are represented to hold it fast—On the other side is the Spread Eagle—Great attention was paid the Indians while in the City—They were caressed, invited, entertained at all the publick places of amusement by the first rank.¹⁰⁶

These medals were important symbols, and bestowing such a medal on Bloody Fellow attested to the American President's perception of the headman's standing among the Cherokees.

Bloody Fellow (*Nenetooyah*) had relocated to the Chickamauga towns when the initial settlements were established in 1777.¹⁰⁷ The Spanish commented on Bloody Fellow's success as a war leader approximately a decade later, "The Cherokees always enraged against the United States, are at present attacking the settlement of Cumberland, under command of the Chief called Bloody Fellow, whose son the Americans killed a short time ago."¹⁰⁸ The death of Bloody Fellow's son demonstrates, again, the role that kinship played in motivating war parties. Regardless of individual warrior motivation, war leaders needed charisma to inspire men to join in war with them. The Indian trader, Pantan noted Cherokee men "for War are Composed of Men who have distinguished

¹⁰⁶ John McDonald to William Pantan, Cherokee Nation, June 7, 1792, *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, "Papers Relating to the Georgia-Florida Frontier," Vol. 23, No. 2 (June:1939), 190.

¹⁰⁷ In 1792, Bloody Fellow was reported to be a resident of Willstown, present-day Fort Payne, Alabama. See John Sevier to William Blount, Little River, September 13, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 278.

¹⁰⁸ O'Neil to Galvez, Pensacola, May 20, 1786, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 10, (1938): 137.

themselves in exploits of that nature they have of Course Considerable sway.”¹⁰⁹ As stated previously, once a man established his oratorical skills as a war leader, he often served as a diplomat. Bloody Fellow’s tenure as a war leader among Chickamaugas directly correlated to his status as a respected diplomat. In their efforts to support an alliance among southern Natives, the Spanish contended that Bloody Fellow “should be sent to the Choctaws & Chickesaws” because he was “well known.”¹¹⁰ Much like Dragging Canoe, Bloody Fellow also relied on his masculine identity as a warrior-diplomat to coordinate the southern Natives in unison.

In Philadelphia, Bloody Fellow also relayed a message from the Natchez, Creeks, Chickasaws, and Choctaws. In his message Chinabee, “chief of the Natchez” said “I look upon the Cherokees as our elder brothers,”¹¹¹ further demonstrating the existence of a Pan-Indian network. On behalf of the Creeks, Bloody Fellow presented “a single string of white wampum.”¹¹² On behalf of the Chickasaws and Choctaws, Bloody Fellow delivered a talk brought to a Chickamauga town by two Chickasaws and two Choctaws demonstrating the role Chickamauga towns played in early Pan-Indian efforts. According to Bloody Fellow, the Chickasaws and Choctaws also referred to the Cherokees as elder brothers and desired that the President “would hear what you should say in our behalf,

¹⁰⁹ Pantan to Carondelet, Pensacola, November 6, 1792, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 28 (1956): 133.

¹¹⁰ *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 28 (1956): 133.

¹¹¹ Bloody Fellow to the Secretary of War, January 9, 1792, Philadelphia, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 204-5.

¹¹² *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 204-5.

and, on your return, we will again attend upon you to learn the news.”¹¹³ The role Bloody Fellow played as spokesperson for multiple Native groups demonstrated his diplomatic prowess and authority.

Aware of the Pan-Indian efforts of Chickamauga headmen, Washington warned Bloody Fellow that the Americans planned to attack “the Northern Indians” in the coming months, and “the Commander was to carry the paper of peace in one hand, & in the other the Hatchet, if they accept of peace, he says they will get it, if not, he never means to crave it of them again.”¹¹⁴ Washington’s intent was two-fold in that he assuredly hoped that such a warning would dissuade Cherokees from acting with other nations in the future, and the president also hoped that Cherokee ambassadors would deliver the threat to their allies in the north.

Washington also gave Bloody Fellow a new name: “the more honorable name of General Eskaqua.”¹¹⁵ Bloody Fellow’s new name further demonstrated his significance to the diplomacy of the Chickamauga or Lower Towns. General Eskaqua was charged by the President to explain to the Cherokee people how much the President loved them, how he “earnestly” desired their happiness, and how they must “restrain” their “young people.”¹¹⁶ Naming was important to Cherokee men and denoted progressions in one’s status. Cherokee mothers named their boys, but once males distinguished themselves in

¹¹³ *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 205.

¹¹⁴ John McDonald to William Panton, Cherokee Nation, June 7, 1792 *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, “Papers Relating to the Georgia-Florida Frontier,” Vol. 23, No. 2 (June: 1939), 190-91.

¹¹⁵ Blount to the Cherokees assembled at Coyatee, May 23, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 268.

¹¹⁶ *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 268.

battle and achieved manhood, they were given new names, by male relatives or kin of their fathers.¹¹⁷ Oftentimes, these names indicated something about the nature of their achievements. Some obvious examples include: White Man Killer and Chickasaw Killer. While Bloody Fellow's name did not indicate specific victims, the use of "Bloody" speaks a great deal to his success as a warrior, and by extension, his masculine spiritual power.¹¹⁸

General Eskagua also held symbolic significance. "General" was in recognition of Bloody Fellow's status as a warrior. "Eskagua" translated to "Clear Sky."¹¹⁹ As his new name suggested, General Eskagua was charged with encouraging peace between the Cherokees and the Americans. To further solidify peace, Secretary of War Henry Knox agreed to an annuity of fifteen hundred dollars, and to provide the Cherokees livestock, hoes, and plows to further their acquisition of "civilization." After his arrival back in the Lower Towns in 1792, Bloody Fellow and others appeared committed to peace. During their meeting with Blount in May, Bloody Fellow along with other headmen and warriors from the Chickamauga towns "marched in, painted in black, and sprinkled over with flour, meaning to show they had been at war, but were then for peace," white being the

¹¹⁷ Raymond Fogelson, "On the Petticoat Government," 177.

¹¹⁸ On the spiritual significance of blood see: See Greg O'Brien, *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age*, xxviii-xxix and Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 35-36. Raymond Fogelson also discusses the spiritual power inherent in blood, and how men going to war or participating in ball games had to become like menstruating women through scratching rituals to prepare themselves to shed the blood of others. See Fogelson, "On the Petticoat Government," 174-75.

¹¹⁹ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 76.

color of peace.¹²⁰ Blount reported gladly that Bloody Fellow “appears to have entered fully into the views of the United States.” The governor believed that he could rely on Bloody Fellow and John Watts “to be the champions of peace.”¹²¹

Perhaps Bloody Fellow was sincere, but Blount’s other “champion of peace,” John Watts left Coyatee a number of days after Blount’s departure to meet with the Spanish in Pensacola. Watts’ reversal with Blount was not the first change of heart the charismatic warrior experienced. In the winter of 1792, John Watts, originally from the Overhill region, delivered a talk from Little Turkey, expressing his displeasure with the Chickamauga towns. Conciliatory headmen encouraged Watts to deliver the message directly to Running Water, as the people of that town requested his presence twice since the death of Dragging Canoe.¹²² While in the Lower Towns delivering Little Turkey’s message Watts changed his position regarding peace with the Americans, and took up the Chickamauga towns’ request to serve as a war leader. War leaders relied on the support of their warriors, which required they demonstrate their spiritual power by leading warriors in battle successes. Town councils continued to meet and work toward consensus. Even so, as the good man ideal instructed, men continued to pursue their interests cautiously, and individual decisions were respected. The Cherokee headmen of

¹²⁰ Blount to the Cherokees assembled at Coyatee, May 23, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 269.

¹²¹ *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 269.

¹²² The Report of David Craig to William Blount, March 15, 1792, Knoxville, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 265.

the late eighteenth century did not “rule” unchecked. Instead, their authority derived from their popularity and their ability to persuade.¹²³

After meeting with the Spanish in Pensacola, John Watts returned to the Lower Towns in August 1792, and declared his intentions for war against Americans. Watts resided in Willstown (present-day Fort Payne, Alabama), and from there he invited all warriors living in the nation to come and participate in war with him.¹²⁴ Watts told the gathered warriors of the Spanish promised to provide guns, ammunition, and other goods to the Cherokees. After Watts spoke, Bloody Fellow stood up and addressed the warriors to argue that war against the Americans was unwarranted: “Look here at the things I have fetched for myself [referring to the gifts he received while in Philadelphia], likewise for you warriors! . . . I did not go by myself, others went with me. If I had gone by myself, perhaps you might have thought that I had made it myself. You had better take my talk and stay at home, and mind your women and children.”¹²⁵ Bloody Fellow referred to the

¹²³ Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*, 167; Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 79. Both Boulware and Hoig state that Watts was elected as the head war chief of the Chickamaugas. This interpretation comes directly from American contemporaries of Watts, but accepting their understanding of events, in this case, ignores the nature of Cherokee politics at the time. As has already been stated, Cherokee politics in the late eighteenth century were evolving from earlier eighteenth-century models, such as the greater participation of warriors in diplomacy. However, in many ways political practices remained much the same. Cherokee politics remained decentralized. There does seem to be a shift from town to region affiliations, but separate headmen for the Chickamauga towns are listed in various talks and treaties—Dragging Canoe was never the only war leader, and by extension, John Watts did not replace him in this regard. William McGloughlin in *The Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 60, notes that the various war leaders of the Chickamauga or Lower Towns ruled like an “oligarchy,” but this too ignores the political culture of the Cherokees in the late eighteenth century.

¹²⁴ Willstown was the site of an old Creek town, and the area initially got its Cherokee name from the towns leading resident and trader, Red-headed Will Webber. Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 81.

¹²⁵ Information provided by Richard Finnelson to William Blount, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 290.

diplomatic success that he achieved in Philadelphia to justify his suggestion to not attack the Americans.

Tahlonteskee, also a nephew of Old Tassel, traveled with both delegations to Philadelphia and Pensacola declared, "I Too have been to Pensacola, and seen the Governor as well as Watts, and heard his talk. I think a great deal of his talk, for it is good. I shall try to do as he directed me; and sat down." Bloody Fellow continued, but while he was talking John Watts rose and claimed that "the day is come when I must bloody my hands again. Tomorrow I shall send off a runner to the Creek nations to fetch my friends in. Then I shall have people enough to go with the Cumberland or any place that I want to go to." The warriors then

dispersed for about half an hour then returned stripped all to their flaps, painted black, dancing the war dance in the square around the flag of the United States, and continuing to dance until the evening. At night they went to the town house, and continued the war dance all night.¹²⁶

Despite the fact that the warriors seemed unified behind Watts the debate continued the next day. Bloody Fellow again referred to his achievements in Philadelphia and pointed to the material trappings of his success, including "his coat with silver epaulettes, and his scarlet match coat, with broad silver lace." The headman pointed to his medal and said "this is silver, and surely must have cost a good deal of money . . . I have brought a good deal of good rich clothes to many of you as well as myself. I would wish none of you to

¹²⁶ Information provided by Richard Finnelson to William Blount, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 290.

go to war, but lay at peace, as I intend to do myself.” When Bloody Fellow mentioned his medal John Watts took his off to demonstrate his intentions to end his agreements with the United States.¹²⁷

White Owl’s Son, Dragging Canoe’s brother, also interjected, “My father was a man, and I am as good as he was. To war I will go, and spill blood in spite of what you can say. From this day out I will do as I please.” John Watts responded by taking White Owl’s Son by the hand and declaring, “You are a man, and I like your talk; to war we will go together.” White Owl and John Watts’ words demonstrate the important connection between war and Cherokee manhood. A Shawnee representative that resided in the Lower Town of Running Water stood “and advancing said, stretching out his hands, With these hands I have taken the life of three hundred men, and now the time is come when they shall take the life of three hundred more.” With the sentiment of the gathered warriors clearly for war Bloody Fellow announced “If you will go to war you must go; I shall not, and sat down appearing much dejected and dissatisfied.” Then John Watts announced that they would go to Lookout Mountain to further prepare for their battle.¹²⁸ After Watts’ announcement, “the council generally rose, declaring they would join with Watts in war, and dispersed for about an hour and a half, then from four to five hundred returned to the squares, stripped to their flaps, painted black, with their guns and

¹²⁷ *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 290.

¹²⁸ Lookout Mountain was the home of Richard Justice, a Cherokee spiritual leader, and perhaps the need to travel to Lookout Mountain was due to the desire to undergo ritual preparations for war.

hatchets, and commenced the war dance round the flag of the United States, which they continued till night.”¹²⁹

The opposing opinions of Bloody Fellow and Watts, along with his supporters, demonstrate that contests over masculine expressions were not confined to Chickamauga-historic town disputes, but divisions were growing among Chickamaugas themselves regarding the best policy to combat American colonialism. As the debate at Willstown showed, war leaders all received an opportunity to persuade the warriors to join with them, but they did not have the authority to coerce or force them into embracing a policy they did support. Bloody Fellow spoke earnestly for peace, but when he discovered that he could not persuade the warriors to heed his suggestions he sat down and ultimately did not participate in the attack that followed. The discussion at Willstown offers more proofs for the nature of Cherokee political power in the late eighteenth century and its similarities to earlier eighteenth-century models. The good man ideal dictated that the war leaders make their opinions known, but as Bloody Fellow’s desires were not those of the majority, he fulfilled the ideal by not directly frustrating the efforts of others and creating overt disharmony among the gathering of Cherokee warriors.¹³⁰

In addition to illustrating the nature of war leaders’ authority, the events at Willstown also demonstrate the continued importance of ritual among Cherokees in the late eighteenth century. While spiritual revitalization is characteristic of the Pan-Indian

¹²⁹ Information provided by Richard Finnelson to William Blount, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 290.

¹³⁰ Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors,” 32.

movement of the Shawnees and Creeks, historians often note the loss of spiritual traditions in Chickamauga towns because they collapsed all of their calendar celebrations into one annual Green Corn Ceremony.¹³¹ Gregory Evans Dowd, however, disagrees with this interpretation and argues instead that many Native spiritual practices and rituals continued. Additionally, Dowd asserts that Native beliefs regarding the sources of power—how one gained or lost power—remained unchanged.¹³² This point is borne out in the examples of maintained ritualistic features in Cherokee warfare. Traditional war speeches were held before parties left for raiding, as demonstrated at Willstown, and dances and celebrations were held when successful warriors returned in order to reacclimate men who had spilled blood into civil society.¹³³

On February 26, 1792, before Dragging Canoe's death, the Cherokees held a "scalp-dance" where Richard Justice and another Cherokee took a scalp and "tore it with their hands and teeth, with great ferocity, as did, also, the warriors generally, with all the forms, gestures, exultations, and declarations, of a war-dance."¹³⁴ In another few days, on February 29, an "Eagle-tail dance was held, to which came warriors from the Running Water [village], which was also danced with all the forms of a war-dance, exulting over

¹³¹ Jon Parmenter, "Dragging Canoe," 132, notes the "telescoping" of ritual celebrations.

¹³² Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 61.

¹³³ The Report of David Craig to William Blount, March 15, 1792, Knoxville, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 264. Dowd also notes a combined Chickamauga, Creek, and Shawnee ceremony prior to a joint raid in *A Spirited Resistance*, 109-10.

¹³⁴ The Report of David Craig to William Blount, March 15, 1792, Knoxville, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 264.

the scalps.”¹³⁵ It is clear that the Chickamauga towns provided an outlet for Cherokee men to engage in historic masculine acts, as well as have those acts validated and praised through scalp dances and other ritual celebrations. In the Chickamauga or Lower Towns, male spiritual power derived from shedding the blood of enemies, and the social structures existent in these towns celebrated and reaffirmed this derivation of masculine power. The presence of Richard Justice also marks the importance of spiritualism and ritual in Chickamauga towns. Justice was a religious leader who resided in the Lookout Mountain town.¹³⁶ Even though the celebrations that Richard Justice participated in occurred before the death of Dragging Canoe, the events at Willstown, and the continued presence of men like Justice, prove that the politics and spiritualization in the Lower Towns continued after the passing of the war leader. Dragging Canoe played a pivotal role in the formation of the Chickamauga towns and the articulation of a Cherokee identity predicated on historic gender roles and political structures; however, the continuation of these approaches after his death highlights that Dragging Canoe was one of a number of headmen and war leaders that held similar beliefs in the continuity of historic Cherokee notions of gender and spiritual power.

The importance of a Pan-Indian alliance to the vision of Chickamauga identity and foreign policy also continued once Dragging Canoe died. While Bloody Fellow argued against war in Willstown in 1792 and did not participate in the following raids, he

¹³⁵ The Report of David Craig to William Blount, March 15, 1792, Knoxville, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 264.

¹³⁶ Cherokee headman, Little Turkey refers to Richard Justice as a “conjurer.” See The Report of David Craig to William Blount, March 15, 1792, Knoxville, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 265. Also the fact that the original town sites were evacuated because of witches.

experienced a change in sentiment at some point that year, and was in New Orleans in November to meet with Spanish officials. Once there, Bloody Fellow requested “that Spain reestablish the ancient fort at Tombigbee” in present-day western Alabama.¹³⁷ This proposed fort would place the Spanish close to the highly contested Muscle Shoals region in present-day northern Alabama.¹³⁸ Not only would this fort provide easier access to ammunition and other supplies provided by the Spanish, but the Cherokees also hoped that the Spanish fort would discourage American settlement in the area. The Spanish liked Bloody Fellow’s suggestion, as it placed them in closer contact to all the southern Indian nations that they attempted to unify against the American government.¹³⁹

While the Spanish bragged to one another of their success in forging a Native alliance, Bloody Fellow’s talks proved pivotal for a Pan-Indian alliance supplied by Spanish officials. While he was in New Orleans in 1792, Bloody Fellow met with headmen from other southern nations and

spoke . . . with much force and energy against the incessant usurpations and vexations by the Americans; he made plain to all their plans to destroy the Indian nations and take from them by force their hunting lands, the only sustenance that

¹³⁷ Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, November 20, 1792, *Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794*, Vol. IV, 96. Also in *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No 28 (1956): 136. The Breath and Charles of Chickamauga, all Lower Town headmen, also traveled to New Orleans with Bloody Fellow. See Carondelet to the Cherokee Nation, New Orleans, November 24, 1792, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 28 (1956): 137.

¹³⁸ Muscle Shoals was a valuable stretch of land because of the fertility of the soil located there along the banks of the Tennessee River. Americans attempted to move into the area through the latter part of the eighteenth century, and the Shoals continued to be a contested area into the nineteenth century. Cherokees remained adamant about preventing American settlement on the Shoals and many land cession treaties included American attempts to acquire Muscle Shoals and the Cherokees’ refusal. See Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 74, 93-95.

¹³⁹ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 84.

the present generation has or will have, and displayed a collar sent by his nation as a plea for help.¹⁴⁰

After Bloody Fellow's delivery, the other headmen took up the collar "as a sign of agreement."¹⁴¹ Bloody Fellow's efforts did not end in New Orleans. When he left the Spanish post there he traveled to the "Chacktaw nation" to persuade a number of their men to travel back to the Chickamauga towns with him "in order to hold friendly talks with our People & the northward tribes also." Bloody Fellow also planned to stop and collect Chickasaw representatives on his way back east "to Conclude on a general Union."¹⁴² The Chickasaws "were in favor of this General Congress scheme presented by Bloody Fellow," but pulled out of diplomatic talks when a group of Creeks killed one of their tribesmen. Bloody Fellow's efforts illustrate the difficulty attendant in Native diplomacy in the late eighteenth century. Bloody Fellow's status among other southern Natives is clear, but his charisma and persuasion proved ineffective in ending disputes between the southern groups and fostering unity.

Despite the setbacks, Bloody Fellow and others continued to strive for a Pan-Indian alliance. Appreciating the necessity of Spanish supplies, Bloody Fellow also strove to maintain a close diplomatic relationship with the Europeans. At some point,

¹⁴⁰ Carondelet to Aranda, New Orleans, November 28, 1792, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 28 (1956): 141.

¹⁴¹ *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 28 (1956): 141. The other headmen present included: "King of the Chickasaws, Franchimastabe the Great Chief of the Choctaws, Kiskililaski, Great Chief of the Creek Town of Cussitaws, with twenty-six Great and small medal chiefs of the Choctaw nation and some thousand and four Captains and Warriors who accompanied Franchimastabe, or who happened to come at the same time . . . and Seven Cherokee Warriors and Chiefs." See Carondelet to Aranda, New Orleans, November 28, 1792, *East Tennessee Historical Publications* No. 28 (1956): 139.

¹⁴² Bloody Fellow to Carondelet, Boufouka, February, 1793, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 29 (1957): 155.

Bloody Fellow sent his son to live in New Orleans, perhaps using his kin in the historic mode of a resident ambassador, much like the practices of the Shawnees and Cherokees discussed above. In April 1793, Bloody Fellow inquired about the “welfare of his Son.”¹⁴³ The Spanish continued to rely mightily on Bloody Fellow in their efforts to facilitate unity between Natives. A Spanish official wrote to the headman to notify him of a meeting they planned of the southern Indians, and their expectation “to see you [Bloody Fellow] there with as many Chiefs of your Nation as will come & likewise I rely on your bringing along with you some people of the Northern Nations . . . I repeat to you not to fail & bring Deputies from the Northern tribes.”¹⁴⁴ The energies that the Cherokees put into their diplomacy with Native groups north of the Ohio in the 1780s were still depended upon in the 1790s. Bloody Fellow’s prominent role in this diplomacy illustrates the continued efforts of Chickamaugas in establishing a Pan-Indian alliance, as well as the headman’s clout among other nations, including Euro-American nations. Spanish records indicate that alliance was achieved in October 1793.¹⁴⁵

Bloody Fellow’s efforts even persuaded Little Turkey, who was well-known as a proponent of peace at the time. Little Turkey (*Kanitta*) originally resided in Seneca, a Cherokee town in present-day South Carolina. As a result of the loss of Cherokee lands in

¹⁴³ John McDonald to Carondelet, Cherokees, April 5, 1793, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 31 (1959): 71.

¹⁴⁴ Gayoso to Bloody Fellow, Natchez, April 7, 1793, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 31 (1959): 78.

¹⁴⁵ Treaty of Nogales, October 28, 1793, *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Vol. IV, 223-27. No Cherokees attended the treaty signing, as their principal diplomat, Bloody Fellow, was leading a war party against American settlements. “Suluche Mastabe” signed for the “Creek, Talapoosa and Alibamon nations” as well as for the “Cherokee nation.” Signatories also represented the Chickasaws and Choctaws.

South Carolina, Little Turkey moved to New Seneca also called Turkey's Town in present-day eastern Alabama. Little Turkey delivered a talk to the Chickamauga towns in early 1792 "expressive of his disapprobation of their late conduct."¹⁴⁶ Little Turkey

was tired of talking to them; that he had heard what they had lately done; that he did not intend to travel the path to them any more, to hold talks; if they wanted to go to war, go, and he would sit still and look at them; they must stay on their own side of the mountain, (Chatanuga) and not mix with the other parts of the nation.¹⁴⁷

Little Turkey viewed the Chickamaugas as the source of disruption. Because their warfare threatened the harmony of other towns and regions Little Turkey wanted to place physical distance between him and those with policies he did not agree. Little Turkey's attempts to persuade the Chickamaugas followed by his desire to stay away from them demonstrated the practice of the good man ideal as he continued to pursue his own course without directly frustrating the efforts of the Chickamaugas.

Despite his earlier exertions against war, Little Turkey wrote to Panton in Pensacola in 1793 asking the trader for advice about what to do regarding peace or war. In addition to a direct answer, Little Turkey also sought assurances for continued support and asked Panton "whether you and the Spaniards will stop this Trade from us or not; we are in hopes you will allow our Traders to bring goods and ammunition amongst us as

¹⁴⁶ The Report of David Craig to William Blount, March 15, 1792, Knoxville, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 265.

¹⁴⁷ *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 265.

usual.”¹⁴⁸ Little Turkey was also desirous that Panton respond to him and his town specifically “write your talk only to me, and this Towns people.”¹⁴⁹ It is clear from Little Turkey’s communication that he preferred peace but was willing to entertain war with the Americans if he received assurances that the Cherokees would receive adequate supplies. The headman wanted Panton to communicate directly with him so that he could arrive to the council with exclusive information, thereby proving his diplomatic prowess.

A month after Turkey’s own plea, Bloody Fellow wrote to the Spanish in New Orleans notifying them that traders were coming, and that the Cherokees depended on the Spanish to supply them in their war with the Americans. Bloody Fellow also asked the Spanish to try to convince Little Turkey of their support. “The Little Turkey will accompany the Traders down . . . The Turkey are a little doubtful of Some things I told him, which passed between your Excellency & me—take pains to explain things to him.”¹⁵⁰ Despite the diplomatic efforts of Bloody Fellow and Little Turkey, division between regions in the Cherokee nation increased.

In 1792, the Cherokee Council met in Estanaula to discuss the report of the delegates to Philadelphia, as well as the concerns of additional land cessions, and current boundaries. Those present included: “the Little Turkey, great beloved man of the whole

¹⁴⁸ The Turkey to William Panton, New Seneca, July 24, 1793, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (December, 1939): 385-86.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Bloody Fellow to Carondelet, Cherokees, August 14, 1793, *Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794*, Vol. IV, 199. Little Turkey also traveled to Pensacola to acquire supplies. John McDonald wrote to the Spanish there on behalf of Turkey and the rest of the Cherokees and requested supplies. See John McDonald to Enrique White, Cherokees, September 12, 1793, *East Tennessee Historical Publications* No. 35 (1963): 91.

nation; the Badger, the beloved man of the Southern division; the Hanging Maw, beloved man of the Northern division,” in addition to other town representatives.¹⁵¹ This demonstrated that Cherokees began to restructure their political representation and identities, moving from a council structure that consisted of town representation to a council that also included headmen from specific regions. In the fall of 1793, John McDonald warned:

The present State of the Nation Still remains in the Same alarming Condition as when I wrote you last & everyday threaten to become more & more So, not so much from the fear of invading enemy as from the Division among themselves, arising from private Animosity, Jealousy, or envy of each other . . . What is Called the Five lower towns [the Chickamaugas] are all unanimous, & Some days Since all Started on an expedition to the Settlements, termed the New State, Commanded by the Bloody Fellow & Watts.¹⁵²

By 1794, these divisions became more entrenched in their opposing foreign policies: the “Northern division” preferred peace with the Americans, while the “Southern division” wanted to continue the war. To force the Lower Towns or southern division to desist in their attacks, men in the northern division attacked Creek allies of the Chickamaugas as they passed through the Upper Towns. The result was a great deal of confusion, not just

¹⁵¹ “The Journal of the Grand Cherokee Council,” Estanaula, June 26, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 271.

¹⁵² John McDonald to William Panton, Cherokees, September 12, 1793, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (March, 1940): 77. “Altho’ there is not a General turning out of the whole nation, yet I am of an opinion that more or less have joined from all parts of it, So that I Judge the whole that’s gone, will amount to about Six or Seven hundred; much larger body would have Gone, if they had Ammunition, indeed those who are gone are but lightly furnished with Sores of ware—The Turkey went against taking any part in the present dispute, till he knew positively himself whether or not he could be plentifully Supplied with ammunition from the Spanish Govern’t—The Bloody Fellow relying on the assur’ce already given him to that effect Could not be prevailed to defer Striking in his turn any longer.”

between the Cherokees and the Creeks, but also between the opposing Cherokee regions.¹⁵³

Despite the promising Pan-Indian achievements in 1793, in less than a year things began to unravel for Chickamauga Cherokees, due in part to their internal political divisions, but also because of American attacks on the Lower Towns of Nickajack and Running Water, and the end of Spanish promises of continued support. The military efforts of the Chickamaugas in 1793 did not result in great success, and in response a group of Cherokee headmen, including those from Lower Towns attended a treaty meeting in Philadelphia in the summer of 1794. Once there the Cherokees signed a document that reaffirmed the promises of two years before in the Treaty of Holston. Despite this new treaty agreement some attacks continued, and in the fall of 1794, an American force attacked and destroyed Nickajack and Running Water. John Watts immediately wrote to establish peace after these attacks.¹⁵⁴ Even if a large number of Chickamauga warriors wanted to continue their fight, they needed ammunition and supplies. The Spanish, once eager to provide the Cherokees and others, were caused by events in Europe to abandon their endeavors to subsidize a Pan-Indian alliance against the Americans. Instead, in 1794, the Spanish encouraged the Cherokees and other Natives

¹⁵³ John McDonald to Enrique White, Cherokees, August 17, 1794, *Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794*, Vol. IV, 334-66.

¹⁵⁴ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 86-88. One headman from Nickajack, The Breath, was killed in this attack. In addition to this loss, nineteen women and children were captured by the Americans, and approximately 150 Cherokee homes were destroyed in these two towns.

to accept American offers of peace.¹⁵⁵ In 1794, in result of discontinued Spanish support, and their inability to stop colonialism, the Chickamaugas ended their active resistance to American settlers.

This chapter examined the disputed nature of Cherokee masculinity during the Revolutionary era, from 1776 to 1794, by highlighting the pressures posed to Cherokee masculinity, as well as the competing ideals and expressions of manhood in question during this time period. Through highlighting this moment of crisis in Cherokee society, this examination has demonstrated the fluid and contested nature of Cherokee identity in the Revolutionary era. Many men in Dragging Canoe's generation are reflective of the good man ideal through their actions of physically relocating to new Cherokee town sites. Their relocation allowed Cherokees to avoid disharmony in their historic towns and the freedom to model their vision for a Cherokee future based on historic gender roles and a violent defense of Cherokee society through a Pan-Indian Alliance. Cherokee culture, like all American Indian cultures, was not (and is not) static. The contests over identity emphasized during this period continued throughout the nineteenth century before and after removal West. While differences of opinion did depend in part on age, there were underlying conflicts over gender roles and gender identity that explain the generational divide. Additionally, this chapter underscores this conflict in gender ideals and expressions to demonstrate the Revolutionary era's implications for the more thoroughly documented gender crisis in Cherokee society in the early nineteenth century.

¹⁵⁵ The events of the French Revolution necessitated the alteration of Spain's attention and monetary allocations. See Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 112-13.

CHAPTER III

“WE WERE TOLD TO LEARN TO LIVE LIKE WHITE PEOPLE”: CHEROKEE MASCULINITY AND THE “CIVILIZATION” PROGRAM, 1794- 1830

After the American Revolution, a new United States government encouraged “civilization” programs within American Indian communities, which encouraged the reorganization of Native homes. Cherokees incorporated “civilization” policies into their lives in varying degrees. Among other things, “civilization” promoted an end to Native male activities such as hunting and war, and encouraged men to become farmers. Women, historically responsible for farming, were instructed to cease their agricultural labors and confine themselves to sewing, weaving, and other tasks in the home.

This chapter analyzes the role of masculinity as a shaper of Cherokee identity in the early nineteenth century, with a particular focus on responses to the United States government’s policy of “civilization.” In eighteenth-century Cherokee society, masculinity was connected to war and hunting. A Cherokee boy’s ability to achieve manhood depended upon his ability to take life—both animal and human. The end of the Chickamauga wars and the decreased market for animal pelts closed these well-established paths to manhood; however, the need to express one’s masculinity did not fade. This chapter examines the continued importance of Cherokee masculinity’s role in cultural change and continuation during the early nineteenth century through the lives of

Chickamauga warriors turned successful businessmen, such as The Ridge, Double Head, Bloody Fellow, and others. These men were motivated by the Cherokee cultural requirement that men openly demonstrate their masculinity.

These former warriors seemingly embraced “civilization,” as they operated plantations, ferries, and other businesses and amassed individual wealth. While the avenues they utilized differed from eighteenth-century models, these former Chickamauga warriors desired to demonstrate their gendered power in a way readily available to them. This examination of change and continuity in Cherokee masculinity during the early nineteenth century, admittedly, focuses on select individuals; most Cherokee men did not become successful planters and entrepreneurs. Even so, it is crucial that we understand the cultural motivations for the change embraced by these individuals, as their expressions of masculinity competed with historic models. Given the limited body of scholarship that exists on Cherokee masculinity, this chapter provides a deeper analysis of changing notions of manhood, the evolution of masculine ideals, and their role in shaping Cherokee identity more broadly.¹

¹ Susan Abram offers the only truly ethnohistorical study of Cherokee masculinity in “Real Men.” In this essay Abram highlights the spiritual significance and ritual involved in warfare, and how this war culture reflected Cherokee ideals and expressions of manhood. See Susan Abram, “Real Men: Masculinity, Spirituality, and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Cherokee Warfare,” in *New Men: Manliness in Early America* Thomas A. Foster, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 93-116; Tyler Boulware’s “We are MEN,” analyzes and compares the masculine rhetoric that Cherokees and Euro-Americans employed to define themselves and emasculate the other; however, Boulware makes little attempt to explain and contextualize Cherokee rhetoric within their cultural framework and gendered ideals. See Tyler Boulware, “We are MEN”: Native American and Euro-American Projections of Masculinity During the Seven Years’ War,” in *New Men: Manliness in Early America* Thomas A. Foster, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 70-92; Paul Kelton does not address masculinity specifically, but his discussion of war and diplomacy, two decidedly male activities in Cherokee society, offers little analysis of culture, particularly regarding Cherokee employment of kinship terms such as “elder

Men that emerged as Chickamauga warriors during the American Revolution found themselves in a position in which both avenues to manhood, hunting and warfare, were becoming increasingly narrow. While older headmen desired peace and were willing to cede land to achieve it, Cherokee society had not yet offered viable alternatives to the standard rites of passage for young men. Instead, conciliatory headmen attempted to placate younger warriors with gifts. This solution proved inadequate to men whose masculine ideals were predicated on actively achieving distinction.² Thus, Chickamauga warriors moved and settled new towns in which they could express their manhood through the historic rite of warfare.

brother,” “uncle,” and “father” when engaging in diplomacy with the Iroquois and the British. See Paul Kelton, “The British and Indian War: Cherokee Power and the Fate of Empire in North America,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 2012): 763-92; Michele LeMaster provides a better example for a cultural approach to Cherokee gender (her title claims that the scope of her book includes Southeastern Indians, but many of her examples are Cherokee) in her recent work, but she fails to make clear connections between Cherokee masculinity and gendered and spiritual power. See Michele LeMaster, *Brothers Born of One Mother: British-Native American Relations in the Colonial Southeast* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); Theda Perdue’s seminal ethnohistorical work, *Cherokee Women*, while not specifically about manhood, creates a binary for women’s experience through lengthy examinations of colonialism’s impact on men. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); Nathaniel Sheidley, “Hunting and the politics of masculinity in Cherokee treaty-making,” in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850*, ed. R. Halpern and M. Daunt (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 167-85; Greg O’Brien, “Trying to Look Like Men: Changing Notions of Masculinity Among Choctaw Elites in the Early Republic,” *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South* Craig Friend and Lorri Glover, eds. (University of Georgia Press, 2004), 49-70.

² Nathaniel Sheidley, “Hunting and the politics of masculinity in Cherokee treaty-making,” 167-85. Jon Parmenter also discusses the generational discord created by land sales in his essay “Dragging Canoe (Tsi’yu-gunsi’ni): Chickamauga Cherokee Patriot,” in *The Human Tradition in The American Revolution* Nancy L. Rhoden and Ian Steele, eds. (Wilmington: A Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2000). According to Parmenter, the inability of Cherokee men to hunt threatened their identity as men. Without the ability to hunt, men could not demonstrate their ability to provide for a family; therefore, young Cherokee men became less attractive mates to women. War, another means for Cherokee men to demonstrate their manhood had disappeared as an opportunity after the close of the so-called Cherokee War in 1761, according to Parmenter. This fact put even greater emphasis on hunting as a way to demonstrate masculinity. See also, Tom Hatley *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 205-8.

Even though the Cherokee men who warred against American settlers in the late eighteenth century sought to achieve manhood in familiar ways, their participation in battle evolved markedly from martial traditions earlier in the 1700s. The pressures of colonialism in the eighteenth century made hunting and warfare more about self-aggrandizement and individual activity rather than the historic communal motivations. Cherokee men no longer went to war strictly for clan reasons, which depended on community; they fought instead to assert their individual prowess. Successful warriors were valuable to colonial leaders as a supplementary force in imperial conflicts, as well as a check upon other enemy Indian groups. Cherokee men that fought alongside or against colonists in the eighteenth century did so for their own personal and cultural reasons: blood revenge did not end until the nineteenth century and warfare remained the surest path to manhood. However, Cherokees, along with other Native groups, found themselves increasingly caught in the complex political and economic contests of Anglo-American colonials.

This reality not only had implications for martial culture and Native diplomacy, it also altered the sustenance based hunting activities of men.³ Men no longer hunted only to provide food for their families. They also hunted to acquire trade goods—material possessions that demonstrated their status and manhood.⁴ While the Chickamauga War

³ The more successful Cherokee men were as warriors the more prestige they held with Euro-Americans which allowed them better opportunities to effectively engage in diplomacy on behalf of their people.

⁴ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 84-85 for changes in hunting economies and 90 for changes in warrior culture. Greg O'Brien makes a similar argument for changes among Choctaw men in "Trying to Look Like Men: Changing Notions of Masculinity Among Choctaw Elites in the Early Republic," 58.

offered historically accepted opportunities to Cherokee men to prove their manhood until the early 1790s, it also divided the Cherokees. Some men valued the chance to participate in warfare. Others realized that the raiding could not continue—that Cherokee masculine identity must evolve; however, in the 1770s and 1780s no viable alternatives had yet arisen that were articulated to the nation’s young men.

This situation changed as the nineteenth century approached and the federal government introduced its Indian “civilization” policy. According to this policy, the government promoted the Indians’ adoption of Anglo-American farming techniques and raising livestock for the men, and spinning, weaving, and other Anglo-American domestic responsibilities for the women. Selu, the cosmological basis for Cherokee women’s gendered responsibilities, was the creator of plant and human life. She also kept her methods for corn production from her family, but when her sons killed her, believing her to be a witch, she instructed her children to use her blood to provide themselves with corn for ages to come. In this way, Selu and Cherokee women were symbolically tied to the soil and its harvest and the ability to create and sustain life. Cherokee women farmed

O’Brien discusses elite Choctaw men acquiring goods for status symbols, both to distribute and to keep. Nathaniel Sheidley discusses the growing importance of material goods, particularly for distribution, among aging headmen in his essay “Hunting and the politics of masculinity.” After the introduction of “civilization” headmen discouraged the agent’s distribution of exotic gifts among warriors. See Return Meigs to Israel Wheeler, South West Point, November 21, 1801, Records of the Cherokee Agency in Tennessee, M-208. The Cherokee chiefs request that more useful goods be sent in their annuity. In the last year they received various fine muslins, “silk stockings,” “Ostrich Feathers, Gold & Silver lace,” “Earrings, Cambrick,” and “morocco Shoes” among other items. The young people seemed pleased with these items “But [many were] not of Substantial use; & the Old Chiefs wish that Blankets, Shrouds, & Coating may be sent in preference to such Articles as were mentioned. Some fine Cloth is always expected for the Chiefs.” While the chiefs ensured that only practical gifts were sent in their annuity in the future, they also reserved their privilege to receive exotic gifts—markers of their status.

together in groups, and their matrilineages owned the land. Their activities in their households also included the tanning of hides and the making of clothes. When women adopted the wheel and loom they continued in their traditional household activity of providing clothes for their families. Many grew cotton, an extension of their roles as farmers to replace the deer hide no longer used. While the government's civilization policy promoted farming as a specifically male activity, many women translated their life-giving responsibilities to home gardens and livestock.

Essentially, the government encouraged Indian men to cease hunting and become farmers, and they encouraged Indian women to cease farming and confine themselves more exclusively to household chores. Both changes required fundamental restructuring of gender roles and concepts of masculinity. In return for adopting this new lifestyle, the federal government promised to provide plows, livestock, looms, weaving implements, and any other forms of support, such as blacksmiths and other skilled tradesmen. This is evident in the Secretary of War, James McHenry's instructions to the Cherokee agent in 1799:

It was a principal object of the labors of your Predecessor to introduce among the Cherokee Women: the art of spinning and weaving; and among the men, a taste for raising of stock and Agriculture: in both of which; his success has equalled my expectations. It is enjoined upon you to pursue the same course he has adopted, and continue a kind of School which he had opened within the nation, for teaching the Women and Girls to Spin and weave. If Wheels and Cotton Cards, or other necessary apparatus should be wanted to facilitate their manufacturing Linnen or Cotton Cloathing these will be furnished them. Your best endeavors are

also to be employed to encourage the raising of Stock and promote a taste for Agriculture.⁵

That former Chickamauga warriors embraced Anglo-American lifeways and expressions of masculinity attributed to the former agent's success.

In 1801, Return Jonathan Meigs became Cherokee agent, approximately a decade after the United States first promised to assist the Cherokees in their adoption of Anglo-American lifeways. He observed that Cherokees, "begin to take the comforts of an agricultural life. . . . They make a great deal of Cloth & raise a great many Cattle. They have one Mill they ask for two more."⁶ Meigs went on to inform Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn, that principal headman, Little Turkey "requested me to inform the Executive that they were at peace with all their red Brethren that now they had nothing to hinder them from attending to the objects of Civilization recommended to them by the Government."⁷ Meigs applauded Little Turkey and others for their efforts and proposed that the Cherokee Council "should appoint a respectable man in each Town or Village to watch over the conduct & manners of their people" in order to ensure a more complete adoption of "civilization."⁸ Little Turkey promised to take Meigs's recommendations under advisement.

⁵ James McHenry to Thomas Lewis, Philadelphia, March 13, 1799. Records of the Office of Secretary of War, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs, M-15.

⁶ Meigs to Dearborn, South West Point, July 13, 1801, Records of the Cherokee Indian Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

⁷ Meigs to Secretary of War, South West Point, October 4, 1801, Records of the Cherokee Indian Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

⁸ Meigs to Secretary of War, South West Point, October 4, 1801, Records of the Cherokee Indian Agency in Tennessee, M-208. Meigs suggested, "These particularly to attend to the going out & returning

Little Turkey and a number of former Chickamauga warriors vowed to adopt aspects of “civilization” once they signed their peace with the United States in 1791.⁹ The Treaty of Holston stipulated “that the Cherokee nation may be led to a greater degree of civilization, and to become herdsman and cultivators, instead of remaining in a state of hunters, the United States will from time to time furnish gratuitously the said nation with useful implements of husbandry.”¹⁰ While many warriors, such as Bloody Fellow continued to war against the United States despite signing the treaty in 1791, they ended their hostilities three years later and agreed to the same treaty terms.¹¹ Bloody Fellow encouraged men in his town to adopt farming and livestock. The headman sent a message to the federal government a year after the treaty reminding officials of the promises they made for economic support.

Little Turkey also encouraged government officials to follow-up on their promises. “My family is at a great loss for the want of knowing how to Spin and weave,”

of parties, and to make report to the annual Council, to report also the quantity of Cloth manufactured during each year, that when the year came about they would at once have a View of the State of their people, with regard to morals, Agriculture, & manufactures—“Meigs informed Dearborn that the chiefs he spoke with seemed open to his idea.”

⁹ Little Turkey’s mark does not appear on either the 1791 or 1794 treaties; however, he was recognized as Beloved Man, or principal chief by all the Cherokees (including Chickamaugas) in the 1790s. See Stanley W. Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs: In the Wake of Empire* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1998), 80.

¹⁰ “Treaty with the Cherokee, 1791,” July 2, 1791, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904).

¹¹ The conflict continued after the 1791 treaty, and another treaty was signed in 1794 with the same language. “Treaty with the Cherokee, 1794,” June 26, 1794, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904). OSU Library Electronic Publishing Center, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/che0033.htm>. “Whereas the treaty made and concluded on Holston river, on the second day of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, between the United States of America and the Cherokee nation of Indians, has not been fully carried into execution by reason of some misunderstandings which have arisen:” Accessed September 5, 2015.

complained Little Turkey.¹² The headman requested that someone be sent to make a wheel for his family, as well as someone to provide instruction. In addition to a wheel and instruction, Little Turkey also requested cards, ploughs, and hoes.¹³ The federal government's plan of "civilization," as Little Turkey's request demonstrates, offered assistance to Cherokee women to learn how to spin and weave cloth. To some Cherokee men, the United States' subsidization of "civilization" meant the acquisition of large herds of livestock and the development of sizeable farms and plantations—structures that became visible outward expressions of manhood. Some Cherokee men, however, were not as quick as Bloody Fellow and Little Turkey to adopt Anglo-American lifeways, and they attempted to cling to familiar eighteenth-century gender ideals. For these men, farming was out of the question because it was considered women's work, and Cherokee manhood needed to be attained through acts of bravery and cunning. These Cherokees continued to raid neighboring white settlements and engaged in the status-earning activity of horse stealing.

Tennessee governor, John Sevier, frequently reported complaints made by white settlers against Cherokees involved in the latter activities. In 1797, settlers accused Cherokees of robbing and plundering families along the Cumberland Road. Sevier sent a chastising message to the Cherokees to cease their activities and return stolen property.¹⁴

¹² Little Turkey to Meigs, December 10, 1801, Records of the Cherokee Indian Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ John Sevier to Silas Dinsmoor, Knoxville, January 12, 1797, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode

He accused “foolish young people” for committing robberies and other acts of violence, and he urged the chiefs to display their friendliness toward the white settlers by inquiring after and securing the stolen goods. The message ended with a warning to the Cherokeees that continued hostilities would result in war: “My brothers you know if stealing of horses is Suffered to be done, peace wont last long, and you must be sensible [or] your Situation will be dangerous; you are but few in numbers and war will ruin you if ever you engage in it again.”¹⁵ As Sevier’s words make clear, Cherokee men who chose to demonstrate their masculinity by committing acts of theft and violence would be punished.

Despite Sevier’s threats and warnings, violence did continue. A month after Sevier promised the ruin of the Cherokeees, he again wrote to the chiefs to reprimand them for not reporting the murder of Cherokeees committed by white settlers and the Cherokeees’ response of vengeance.¹⁶ Sevier accused the Cherokeees of making “the innocent suffer for the guilty,” which was “contrary to our reason, and to the laws of the Great being who made all things.” Again, Sevier threatened the violent response from the

=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014.

¹⁵ John Sevier to the warriors and chiefs of the Cherokee Nation, Knoxville, January 12, 1797, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014.

¹⁶ John Sevier to William Blount, Knoxville, February 14, 1797, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014. Sevier reports to Blount that the Cherokee retaliations amount to two persons killed and one wounded.

people of Tennessee if the Cherokees continued their attacks. Sevier took the opportunity to taunt the Cherokee men with the assertion that they were in no position to protect their people from Tennessee militias. The governor stated, “On your side, you are but a handful of people, and you would have to leave your country, which will cause your woman And Children to suffer very much.” Sevier coupled this verbal emasculation of Cherokee men with an avowal that Tennesseans were “not a feard”¹⁷ of war with the Cherokees. In an armed contest between men then, Sevier asserted the supremacy of the settlers.

Cherokee leaders denied wrongdoing and took umbrage with Sevier’s threats. Sevier addressed former Chickamauga leader John Watts, and other chiefs of the Cherokee nation and contended that Cherokees had indeed killed white settlers and plundered their property. In response to the other Cherokee claim, Sevier denied that his preceding communications were threatening in nature and further stated his hopes for peace between white settlers and neighboring Indians.¹⁸ Despite the efforts of diplomacy between Cherokee headmen and federal and state officials, violence continued and not just in Tennessee. In the spring of 1797, settlers from two Georgia counties petitioned their governor to deploy troops to their area of the “Frontiers.” The petitioners stated they

¹⁷ John Sevier to the warriors and chiefs of the Cherokee Nation, Knoxville, February 10, 1797, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014.

¹⁸ John Sevier to John Watts and other chiefs of the Cherokee Nation, Knoxville, March 5, 1797, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014.

had “been much harrassd, and Suffer’d, many Losses, by the cherikee Indians.” Previous attempts by the settlers “to prevent, their properties From being Dayly Carry’d away by the perpetrators” failed. According to these Georgia settlers they feared the loss of their lives, not just their property.¹⁹

These Cherokee men that continued to raid settlers along the Tennessee and Georgia frontiers, were at the most basic level, communicating their displeasure of settler encroachment. Their efforts to dislodge these settlers also spoke to the struggles that Cherokee men had in finding new and acceptable outlets for demonstrations of manhood. Rather than make a conscious decision to steal horses in lieu of going to war, Cherokee men, unconsciously driven by their societal ideals of masculinity, sought new ways to achieve and articulate their status as men. Cherokee culture encouraged bravery among men, and with no other way to demonstrate their courage, some Cherokee men turned to horse theft and raiding to satisfy the societal expectation that men display martial ability and also prove that they could acquire valuable items to support a family.

Many of the skills that men needed to achieve success in battle—bravery, swiftness, stealth, and brutality—were equally important to Cherokee men who stole horses from travelers and raided white settlements to enact blood revenge or take material trophies of war. In this scenario, horses took the place of scalps and war captives, successful warrior thieves returned to their villages with horses, an exceedingly valuable

¹⁹ Petition of the frontier inhabitants of Franklin and Jackson Counties, [Georgia] to Georgia Governor Jared Irwin, May 8, 1797, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&dbs=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014.

commodity in early nineteenth-century America, and other material possessions, or booty.²⁰ Previous generations of Cherokee men relied on hunting and warfare to achieve status, the growing importance of the horse replaced both of these.²¹ In 1799, the Moravians encountered one Cherokee Indian, Kulsathee who operated a stable, by which he provided horses to individuals in return for salt and other trade goods. In this way, Kulsathee replaced war with horse acquisition and hunting and the fur trade with horse letting and trading.²²

Despite a growing reliance of many upon horses as status symbols and primary tokens of trade, throughout the remainder of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century, most men continued to hunt in the winter because hunting remained a prominent cultural marker of manhood. The Moravian missionaries attempting to establish a school in the Cherokee Nation discovered this in 1799. Upon their arrival in Tellico, the missionaries were informed that they were two or three weeks too late to speak with the leading men of the Nation because “almost all” the men were hunting and would “not return home until the end of winter,” because of having to go further and further abroad

²⁰ “Financial statement for funds received in behalf of the Cherokee Nation as full compensation for time and expenses attending and completing the survey of the boundary lines,” Hiwassee, November 1, 1808, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014. This document also details property losses and compensation amounts for area inhabitants who were alleged victims of Cherokee theft. “25 horses stolen by Cherokees.”

²¹ For more on the gendered implications of horse theft see Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 123-24.

²² “1799 Steiner Report,” in *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. I, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2010), 145. The missionaries also found that Kulsathee’s daughters spun their own yarn, and that the family requested a loom and secured the promise of a neighbor to teach the girls how to weave.

to find game.²³ Even though men continued to hunt, game dwindled, making it more difficult for many Cherokee men to acquire trade goods, not to mention food, thereby upsetting men's primary gendered responsibilities to their families and communities.²⁴ As a result, men were increasingly unable to provide for their families as they had fewer pelts to trade for clothing and trade goods. Cherokee women stepped in to fill this void by weaving cotton cloth, which allowed them to provide clothing for their families. While Cherokee women had always engaged with the market to provide for their households, principally through trading or selling food, these earlier economic exchanges did not threaten gender balance because men were also successfully engaging in the market—through the hunt and as intermediaries for women's goods and produce.²⁵ Balance in Cherokee society grew vulnerable as men's economic prospects declined and women's simultaneously rose.

The gendered discord that this created is well documented in Creek society, neighbors of the Cherokees. Claudio Saunt, in particular, argued that market forces and colonialism more generally, created gendered strife in Creek communities, and that these pressures and the imbalance between men and women's historic gendered roles led Creek men to grow increasingly insecure in their manhood. Some Creek men felt comfortable

²³ Abraham Steiner to Frederick William Marhsall, Tellico Blockhouse, November 19, 1799 in *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. I, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2010), 93.

²⁴ Blanket who had once supplied the missionaries with venison had not had "any luck hunting," and as a result his wife went to the missionaries and exchanged "her *only* wooden spoon in return for corn." See March 18, 1811 journal entry in *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 421.

²⁵ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 131.

demonstrating their masculinity through symbols of Euro-Americanism. Others, however, struggled to redefine themselves as men. These troubled warriors tended to strike out at the sources of their cultural change: white people, their livestock, homes, and other accouterments. Saunt argues that they attacked women, often maiming their bodies, as a way of acting out their gendered struggle/fear that women held too much power.²⁶

Changing gender roles also created insecurities in Cherokee society but to a much lesser degree. According to Theda Perdue, this is due to the fact that Cherokee women never really took on the role of trader, as the colonial trade required dealing with other males; thus, Cherokee women continued to allow men to peddle the goods they created and the food that they grew. In Cherokee society, women continued to produce and men continued in their historic role as economic intermediaries.²⁷ Because men and women continued in familiar roles, the gender anxieties that emerged in Creek society did not similarly impact the Cherokees. In addition to this continuation of men's and women's roles in economic exchanges highlighted by Perdue, another reason Cherokee women did

²⁶ Claudio Saunt presents the case that Creek women lost much of their traditional power as they were forced out of necessary roles by the market. Most notably, men no longer needed women to dress skins when the demand for raw hides grew. No longer needing women, men's new economic bread-winning status elevated their gendered authority in Creek society. Women's efforts to find their place in the market and achieve/maintain gendered equality was attempted in many ways. Most notably in spinning. For an exclusive focus on this argument see: "Domestick . . . Quiet being broke": Gender conflict among Creek Indians in the Eighteenth Century," in *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830* Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fredrika J. Teute eds. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). This thesis also appears in Saunt's full-length work: *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For more on this and other structural differences between the Cherokees and Creeks see: Richard A. Sattler, "The Southeast Women's Status Among the Muskogee and Cherokee," *Women and Power in Native North America*, 216-25.

²⁷ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 130-32.

not suffer the same type of violence that Creek women did originated from the power that Cherokee women held in their society.

Even though both the Creeks and the Cherokees were matrilineal, differences existed between the levels of authority and autonomy that women wielded in these neighboring societies. While both Creek and Cherokee women were considered heads of their household, Cherokee matrilineages also controlled the land. In Creek society, the village controlled the land collectively. Because Cherokee women controlled the land, they had authority over the food supply, and this provided them with a great deal of autonomy. Additionally, adultery punishments were different in the two societies. In Creek society punishment for adultery included the cutting off of ears and other physical maiming. Thus, there was a precedent for inflicting this type of physical punishment on women in Creek society. There was no such precedent in Cherokee society. Women were not maimed for adultery or any other offense. Unlike Creek society, there was not a punishment for adultery whatsoever among the Cherokees. According to missionaries that lived among the Cherokees, “the status of women in Cherokee households resulted from “three ancient heathen customs to which they cling inflexibly and rigidly”: the ease of divorce; the lack of “common ownership” between husband and wife, resulting in many wives owning “more cattle than her husband”; and the general nature of matrilineal kinship.”²⁸ Not only did the missionaries recognize the general authority that Cherokee

²⁸ *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. IV, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2012), 1928-29. Confused not only by the nature of Cherokee marriage and kinship, the missionaries also demonstrated their lack of understanding in regards to Cherokee identity: “Many half-Indians, who have had one or several Indian women but could not live in peace with any of

women had because of their matrilineages, the observers also commented on the economic differences that existed between men and women in some households. As matrilineages continued to control the land throughout the early nineteenth century, Cherokee women retained a strong basis for their power that insulated them from violent masculine insecurities.²⁹

Even though Cherokee men did not seem to suffer the same crisis of manhood that the Creeks did, the changing gender roles in their society did threaten balance. Cherokee men needed to find ways to express their manhood to provide a counterweight to Cherokee feminine power. The Cherokee men's reconstruction of their masculinity shared some similarities with that of another Southeastern Native group, the Choctaw. Choctaw men traditionally relied on war exploits to demonstrate their spiritual power; however, the nineteenth century and its accompanying colonial pressures led Choctaw elites to utilize economic means to demonstrate their spiritual power. Choctaw leaders relied on their status to enrich themselves economically, which in turn, further increased their status. These elite men altered their gender ideal away from one of communal responsibilities to one of economic self-aggrandizement.³⁰ Cherokee men also shifted

them, have married white women, and now they are happy. But however willing a white man might be to marry an Indian woman, if he wants [to] see things differently, how will find everywhere how this is rightly conducted to make their home a Hell to them."

²⁹ Richard A. Sattler, "The Southeast Women's Status Among the Muskogee and Cherokee," in *Women and Power in Native North America*, 216-25.

³⁰ Greg O'Brien, "Trying to Look Like Men," 61-63. According to O'Brien, "Elite Choctaw families pursued economic enrichment with little regard for traditional communal obligations," 63. Women's responses to "civilization" were also similar between Choctaw and Cherokee women. In both societies, the government's efforts to promote herding (except in the case of horses) was taken up by the women, which viewed the keeping of livestock as an extension of their historic responsibilities as farmers. For the Cherokees see, Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 137-38. For the Choctaw see, James Taylor Carson,

their gendered expectations to emphasize the acquisition of individual property and economic enhancement. Even though Cherokees did not experience the insecurities of the Creeks, like the Choctaws, Cherokee men needed to find new ways to attain and demonstrate their manhood. The alteration of masculine ideals from a communal to an individual level was a gradual process, and even though the colonial pressures of “civilization” wrought great change, the recreation of men’s roles in society also remained grounded in historic expectations.

Kana’ti, the cosmological basis for Cherokee men’s gendered responsibilities, acted and made decisions on an individual rather than a community basis. He kept his hunting methods secret from his family, and the mere act of hunting itself required him to spend periods of time alone. Once his children killed their mother, his wife, he left them and journeyed alone. However, when his children found him and asked for his assistance he came to their aid. In this way Kana’ti provided the ideal for Cherokee men: men that ultimately relied on themselves and spent periods of time away from their families and communities. Just like Kana’ti, Cherokee men were also expected to forgo their solitary existence and come to the aid of their community. When Cherokee men recreated their gender ideals to allow for the adoption of “civilization,” the individual basis crucial to such a gender construction already existed in Cherokee society.

“Native Americans, the Market Revolution, and Culture Change: The Choctaw Cattle Economy, 1690-1830,” *Agricultural History* 71, no. 1 (Winter, 1997): 1-18.

James Vann is an extreme example and in many ways an exception to the rule of Cherokee men who embraced “civilization,” but he is an instructive example.³¹ Vann was economically self-interested, but as a diplomat he always represented the interests of the community.³² Cherokee chronicler, John Howard Payne, described Vann as a Cherokee “patriot.”³³ James Vann lived in northwest Georgia, where he owned four hundred to eight hundred acres along the Consauga River. With approximately seventy slaves (one of the largest slave labor forces in the Cherokee nation), Vann cultivated corn, fruit, wheat, and cotton and raised cattle that he sold to distant markets. Vann also made a great profit from participating in the slave trade. Through the utilization of slave labor, Vann was able to embrace a new masculinity promoted by the “civilization” program without disrupting historic gendered occupations and engaging in women’s work. Slavery allowed Cherokee men to express their manhood in ways familiar to American society without betraying Cherokee expectations. In addition to the income he made from selling and trading commodities, Vann also built the first mill in the area and owned a store. In 1803, Vann lobbied successfully to have the Federal Road run directly past his home. After the construction of the Federal Road, Vann built a two-story home and named his estate Diamond Hill. Vann also spread his economic interests further east along the

³¹ Tiya Miles, *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 59-60.

³² Tiya Miles, *The House on Diamond Hill*, 69.

³³ John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers* Vol. II, edited by William L. Anderson, Jane L. Brown, and Anne F. Rogers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 103.

federal road and established a tavern and inn, a trading post, and a ferry along the Federal Road and Chattahoochee River thoroughfares.³⁴

Previous generations of men relied on their status as respected warriors and diplomats to receive visible symbols of recognition and respect such as medals and other gifts from colonial officials. Similarly, many Cherokee men in the nineteenth century relied on their status as headmen and the diplomatic opportunities it provided them to acquire the material emblems of this new masculine ideal from the federal government. James Vann, for example, utilized his position as an Upper Town headman to negotiate with the federal government to have the Federal Road ran in such a way that benefitted him economically. Economic status markers were acquired both for individual reasons, but also because Cherokee men sought to protect their communities. Many believed that federal officials would recognize the material trappings of their wealth as evidence of United States prescribed program of cultural advancement. Just as James Vann used his economic and political position to suit his own self-interests, he also employed the same to ward off land cessions. Thus, amassing individual property and communal responsibilities were not mutually exclusive in the emerging masculine ideal for nineteenth-century Cherokee men.

The federal government's policy of "civilization" became the means by which many Cherokee men, particularly former Chickamauga warriors, reinterpreted their manhood in the wake of colonialism, and its corresponding land pressures, game

³⁴ Tiya Miles, *The House on Diamond Hill*, 4.

depletion, and other abuses. During their 1799 journey through Cherokee country, missionary travelers observed Cherokees' adoption of "civilization" and its significance in shaping their communities. Missionaries remarked on the houses built of hewn logs, plastered on the interior; stone fireplaces; ploughed fields free of grass and weeds; the presence of large herds of cattle and pigs, along with various other animals; "well clad" and "fresh, lively, contented" slaves; and cotton grown and spun.³⁵ The Cherokees themselves confirmed their adoption of Anglo-American farming. When asked his opinion regarding the establishment of a mission school among the Cherokees, one Cherokee headman welcomed the idea of Cherokee children learning to read and write, and according to him, he thought they would eventually learn because when they "were told to learn to live like white people, and farming and cotton raising were begun" they thought it was "not for red men" but he had since witnessed success.³⁶ As some Cherokee men expressed new ideals of manhood outlined in the government's "civilization" program, they also desired an Anglo-American education for their children and grandchildren. James Vann believed in the importance of education for Cherokee children and provided land to the Moravians to establish their mission at Springplace. In this way, the Cherokees were like all other Southeastern Natives that welcomed education as a tool to better negotiate with American officials and an avenue for greater market participation.

³⁵ "1799 Steiner Report," in *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. I, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2010), 150.

³⁶ "1799 Steiner Report," in *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. I, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2010), 147.

The Ridge (*Ca-nung-da-cla-geh*),³⁷ a former Chickamauga warrior turned successful planter and businessman, sought just such an education for his daughter Nancy and son John in the Moravian school.³⁸ The Ridge was born in 1771 in present-day Tennessee. As a young man, The Ridge was anxious to prove himself a warrior and achieve his manhood. He did not have to wait long, and in fact, participated in his first battle at the age of fourteen. The Ridge fought with the Chickamauga Cherokees in their raids on white settlements and distinguished himself as a warrior, and by extension, a man. After the Chickamaugas made peace with the American government in the 1790s, The Ridge moved his family near present-day Rome, Georgia and followed many of the aspects of the government's "civilization" program by opening a ferry service and becoming a planter.³⁹ While The Ridge took advantage of Anglo-American economic avenues, he never learned English, and he also never converted to Christianity.⁴⁰ His adoption of cultural change was confined to the economic sphere. Even though he sought an education for his children, like the majority of Cherokees that sent their children to

³⁷ The Ridge received his name, which translates to the man who walks on the mountain top because he was seen to be a man of vision as if he were looking at the world from a mountain ridge top.

³⁸ The Ridge began asking in 1808 and makes arrangements for Nancy in 1809. See *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. III, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2011), 1309-10. Also, December 3, 1808 "Chief The Ridge has been coming to us from time to time already for two years and reminds us of his children." in *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 408.

³⁹ Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, *The Indian Tribes of North America with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs*, vol. I, and William G. McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence in the New Republic*.

⁴⁰ The Ridge seems to suggest that he cannot learn or be taught because of his age. See *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 408. Even though he begins visiting the missionaries as early as 1806. See *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. III, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2011), 1227. They certainly tried to convert him, see *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 470-72. His wife, Susanna, does convert in 1818.

missionary schools, The Ridge did not promote Christian conversion or a cessation of a Native identity.⁴¹ As a young man The Ridge was eager to attain and express his manhood as a successful warrior. The Ridge's desire to continue to express his masculinity continued, and he did so by embracing the new masculine ideal offered by the "civilization" program. The Ridge became a wealthy man and his large plantation was a demonstration of manhood easily recognizable in the nineteenth-century South.

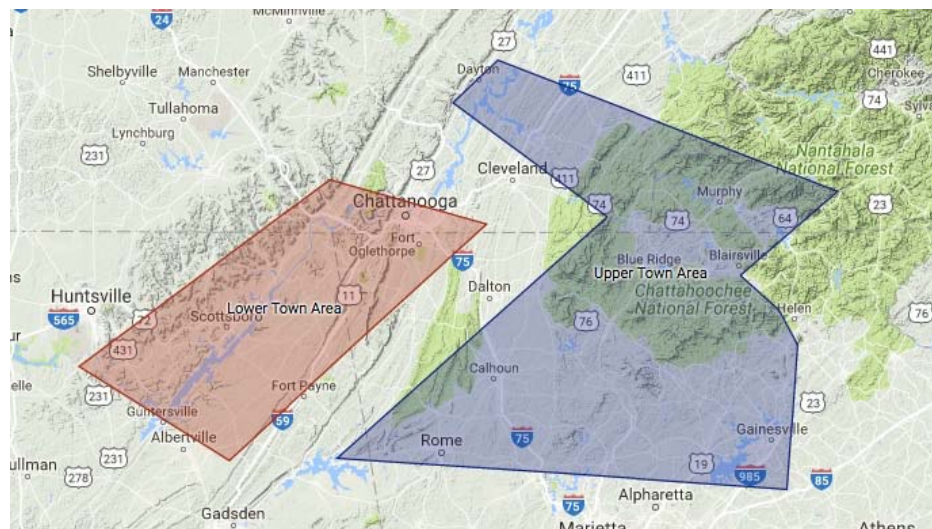


Figure 2. Nineteenth-Century Cherokee Town Regions.⁴²

Both The Ridge and James Vann established their plantations in areas of present-day Georgia, which at the turn of the nineteenth century, were part of the Cherokee region known as the Upper Towns (see Figure 2). The Lower Towns remained home to a

⁴¹ This is evident in Ridge's decision to remove his son, John from the school and have him tutored at home. See *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. IV, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2012), 1927-1928. Page 1935 complaints about the replacement . . . replacement runs off pages 1940-41. Also, at one point, young John causes great consternation among his Moravian instructors when he writes that he is proud to be a "savage."

⁴² Map created by Jamie Mize utilizing Google Maps.

large contingent of former Chickamauga warriors, including Double Head and his nephew, John Watts. Double Head (*Chuqulalaga*) was the brother of the respected headman, Corn Tassel. Unlike his brother, Double Head did not pursue a strategy of peace with American settlers. Instead, Double Head relocated with Dragging Canoe and others to their first settlements on Chickamauga Creek. Double Head continued to fight in the Chickamauga resistance until it ended in 1794. He was known as a fierce warrior and war leader. After the war ended Double Head remained a prominent Cherokee politician and frequently acted as a spokesperson for the Cherokees in diplomatic and treaty negotiations.⁴³

In 1806, Thomas Jefferson awarded one thousand dollars to Double Head to compensate him for promoting “the art of civilization among the Cherokee Nation Indians.”⁴⁴ The federal government not only wanted to compensate the headman for his previous efforts, but they also wanted to encourage Double Head to continue his efforts “to extend his useful example amongst the Red people.”⁴⁵ His efforts in adopting and promoting “civilization” were well known to white government officials and Indians alike. Double Head developed a close working relationship with Return Meigs, and used his diplomatic connections with the Cherokee agent to enrich his personal wealth.⁴⁶

⁴³ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 59, 79, 83-86.

⁴⁴ War Department to Return J. Meigs, January 8, 1806, Records of the Office of Secretary of War, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs, M-15.

⁴⁵ War Department to Return J. Meigs, January 8, 1806.

⁴⁶ John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers* Vol. II, edited by William L. Anderson, Jane L. Brown, and Anne F. Rogers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 102. Payne states: “The whites regarded him [Double Head] as a great chief, but his nation only looked on him as a great orator.” The Cherokees respected his ability to speak eloquently and relied on him to express their opinions in

Double Head was indicative of many other Cherokee men in his willingness to accept the masculine demonstrations that “civilization” provided, but he was simultaneously unwilling to engage in farming, or women’s work. Some Cherokee men purchased slaves to perform the labor on their plantations. In another example of continuity, these men maintained their historic gendered divisions of labor by refusing to farm, or engage in the work of women. So, while the embrace of the “civilization” program brought a great deal of change to Cherokee society, some aspects of earlier eighteenth-century gender ideals endured. Double Head, Vann, and Ridge adopted elite notions of American manhood that emphasized economic success and the acquisition of personal property, rather than other, non-elite versions expressed through manual labor and violence. The embrace of American forms of masculinity set them apart from a majority of Cherokee men that could not afford to purchase slaves or large herds of livestock. Experience as a Chickamauga warrior proved crucial in one’s ability to express their manhood in a “civilized” way, as the years of raids on American settlements resulted in the capture of slaves and livestock. The loot and prisoners taken by Chickamauga warriors in the eighteenth century provided evidence of their spiritual power. These items also proved valuable markers of masculinity in the nineteenth century as elite models of manhood were recreated and reconstructed to fit a mold familiar to all southerners.

diplomacy, but they did not place “any great confidence” in the headman’s “own opinions.” Double Head’s participation in a treaty in 1806 earned him a ten-mile reservation around his residence but cost him his life.

In addition to the establishment of large plantations, engagement in the slave trade, and other business ventures, some Cherokee men also leased their land to white tenant farmers.⁴⁷ The Cherokee Council worried that inviting white settlers to lease Cherokee lands would only exacerbate existing problems with settler encroachment, but Meigs and other government officials encouraged white sharecropping in the hopes that it would lead to greater acculturation of the Cherokees. Indian agent Silas Dinsmoor wrote to Meigs recommending that white settlers be used to promote “civilization” among the Cherokees. Dinsmoor also warned that some care should be taken to ensure that the proposed settlers were “habitually industrious, proved of cleanliness & personal neatness, & exemplary in their manners and deportment.”⁴⁸ Apparently, one white family, employed by the Double Head household was not properly vetted. “Would to God Adams & his daughters had been such! But they are [illegible] otherwise! They girls are criminally lazy!”⁴⁹ complained Dinsmoor. The agent went on, “Double Head offered them cotton, wheels & cards, their board free & all they could make on condition that they would superintend his house & see it kept neat.”⁵⁰ The Adams girls, according to Dinsmoor, did neither despite the fact that “the Indian women in their neighbourhood have generally been making cloth.”⁵¹ From Dinsmoor’s perspective, this family failed

⁴⁷ Land was held in common among all Cherokees, historically through matrilineages, but any Cherokee was at liberty to cultivate as much land as they desired and had the labor to support. Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 136.

⁴⁸ Silas Dinsmoor to Meigs, Camp Columbian Road South of Bear Creek, July 31, 1802. Records of the Cherokee Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

⁴⁹ Silas Dinsmoor to Meigs, Camp Columbian Road South of Bear Creek, July 31, 1802.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

because far from providing an example, they proved less motivated than their Native counterparts.⁵² While “Adams and his daughters” failed to meet cultural expectations, Double Head’s employment of this family to enhance his economic capacity followed the tenets of a nascent nineteenth-century demonstration of Cherokee manhood. Not all Cherokee men, however, were willing to adopt Double Head’s example, and differences of opinion over gender expressions and the future of Cherokee identity more broadly occurred along regional lines.

By the early nineteenth century, a political chasm existed between the Upper and Lower Towns. The adoption of “civilization” was one point of contention, but the divisiveness followed long established geographical differences of opinion. In 1792, for instance, a Cherokee council met to discuss a report from delegates that visited the United States capital, as well as to discuss land boundaries and the possibility for more land cessions. While Little Turkey was noted as the “great beloved man of the whole nation,” regional differences are evident in the Badger’s designation as “the beloved man of the Southern division” and Hanging Maw’s as the “beloved man of the Northern division.”⁵³ The majority of former Chickamauga warriors lived in the Lower Towns, and those that argued for peace during the Chickamauga wars lived in the Upper Towns.

⁵² Dinsmoor’s impassioned diatribe against the Adams family continued: “When I see or hear of human beings [illegible] divesting themselves of the best ornaments of their nature, particularly before those to whom they ought to be examples, I am filled with such indignation that I could almost stand unmoved & see them writhe in their last agonies around the burning Stake.” Silas Dinsmoor to Meigs, Camp Columbian Road South of Bear Creek, July 31, 1802. Records of the Cherokee Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

⁵³ “The Journal of the Grand Cherokee Council,” Estanaula, June 26, 1792, *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, Vol. I, 271.

Even though the Cherokees signed a treaty with the United States ending hostilities in 1791, the two regions lacked unification over a shared strategy to combat American colonialism. Just as Cherokee men in these different regions expressed political differences in the eighteenth century, these geographical differences of opinion continued into the nineteenth century.

Cherokee headmen received instructions in the summer of 1801 to meet with Creek Agent Benjamin Hawkins and other commissioners at the Cherokee Indian Agency in South West Point, near present-day Kingston, Tennessee. The chiefs from the Lower Towns arrived on schedule, but those from the Upper Towns delayed their arrival by deciding to first meet at Estanaula, in present-day northeast Georgia. These men most likely wanted to decide upon a unified position regarding land cessions and other matters that government commissioners often wished to discuss.⁵⁴ The Lower Town headmen took the opportunity of the Upper headmen's absence to discuss their advancement with Hawkins. Double Head, and other prominent Lower Town men, such as John Watts, explained to Hawkins, "that a total change had taken place in the habits of the nation since the introduction of the plan for their civilization." These Cherokee headmen informed Hawkins "that a desire for individual property was very prevalent, and that the current of conversation now was how to acquire it, by attention to stock, to farming and

⁵⁴ Benjamin Hawkins, "Journal," August 7, 1801 in *Letters*, Vol. IX, 369. <https://archive.org/stream/lettersofbenjami00hawk#page/360/mode/2up> Accessed October 25, 2015. Hawkins notes that there was a rumor that the commissioners wanted to meet with the Cherokees for the purpose of acquiring "a large tract of country from them."

to manufactures.”⁵⁵ These Cherokee men expressed their willingness to embrace “civilization” and specifically “individual property.” It is likely that Chickamauga warriors felt confident to lead the way in reconsidering masculine ideals in Cherokee society because they were secure in their manhood. They had already proven themselves fierce, brave warriors—they were not at risk of losing their historically-defined masculinity. In their explanation to Hawkins, these former Chickamauga warriors sought to set themselves apart from their Upper Town counterparts.

When the Lower Town headmen were notified that the other chiefs were convening between themselves before their arrival at the agency they told Hawkins that the Cherokee people were regionally and politically divided. They informed Hawkins that they were in favor of allowing the chiefs meeting at Estanaula “the government of our country as they think proper which lies on the other side of Chihowe Mountain; we shall govern that part to the west.”⁵⁶ These headmen told Hawkins that men from the Upper Towns frequently complained that the Lower Towns received a disproportionate number of wheels, cards, ploughs, and other civilizing implements. Double Head and others disputed this point and instead asserted, “The offer of those things was made to all of us at the same time; we accepted of it, some of us immediately, and others soon after; those who complain came in late; we have got the start of them, which we are determined to

⁵⁵ Benjamin Hawkins, “Journal,” August 7, 1801 in *Letters*, Vol. IX, 360. <https://archive.org/stream/lettersofbenjami00hawk#page/360/mode/2up>. Accessed October 25, 2015.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 362. <https://archive.org/stream/lettersofbenjami00hawk#page/360/mode/2up>. Accessed October 25, 2015.

keep.”⁵⁷ According to the Lower Town headmen, they took the new opportunities offered by the “civilization” program to embrace new expressions of masculinity, and they intended to pursue this new ideal despite criticism from the Upper Towns.

Friction between the two geographical regions of the Cherokee nation continued, and in 1808, a group of Upper Town headmen petitioned president Thomas Jefferson for permission to “separate from the lower by a fixed boundary” and “placed under the Government of the U.S. [and] become Citizens thereof.”⁵⁸ Jefferson responded: “My Children, I shall rejoice to see the day when the red men our Neighbors, become one people with us, enjoying the rights and privileges we do; and living in Peace and Plenty as we do.” The president then went on, however, to make it clear that he did not have confidence in the scheme. He asked,

But are you prepared for this? Have you the resolution to leave off Hunting for your living, to lay off a farm for each family to itself, to live by industry, the men work their farm with their Hands, raising stock or learning trades, as we do [illegible] & weaving Clothes for their husbands and children? All this is necessary before our laws will suit you, or be of any use to you however let you people take the matter into consideration.⁵⁹

Clearly Jefferson held reservations about just how advanced the Cherokees were in their efforts to become “civilized.” Despite the president’s lack of confidence, the Upper

⁵⁷ Benjamin Hawkins, “Journal,” August 7, 1801 in *Letters*, Vol. IX, 362.
<https://archive.org/stream/lettersofbenjami00hawk#page/360/mode/2up> Accessed October 25, 2015.

⁵⁸ Thomas Jefferson to the chiefs of the Upper Cherokees, May (on or before the 5th due to the date of the proceeding letter) 1808, Records of the Office of Secretary of War, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs, M-15. Also in *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. III, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2011), 1206-7.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Cherokee petition demonstrated that many in the Upper Towns were subscribed to the new economic and gender ideals promoted by the United States government.

Even though they downplayed the preferential treatment they received from their agent, the relationship between some Lower Town headmen and Meigs allowed the Lower Towns to enrich themselves both in goods and in money. Double Head, in particular, worked closely with Meigs to achieve land cessions when the government requested them. The Lower Town headman, according to John Howard Payne, “was a favorite among the whites, because he fell in with their plans, and they over-rated his power.”⁶⁰ In 1805, however, when Double Head met with United States officials he went too far. At this meeting, Double Head, assisted by John Chisholm, ceded a large expanse of hunting grounds and arable lands. In return for his influence and acquiescence in this cession, the headman was awarded tracts of land for himself and “a few of his friends” that they, in turn, leased to white men.⁶¹ According to Payne, these tracts consisted of ten square miles around Double Head’s residence, located in present-day Florence, Alabama.⁶² Frustrated by Lower Town headman’s actions, both in ceding the land and in leasing it to white men, and their political impotence in dealings with the United States, a group of Upper Town headmen, including James Vann and The Ridge, met and voted to assassinate Double Head. While the good man ideal allowed Cherokee men to act independently, their actions could not directly impact the wishes of others. Double

⁶⁰ John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers* Vol. II, edited by William L. Anderson, Jane L. Brown, and Anne F. Rogers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 102.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 426.

⁶² *Ibid.*

Head's actions went against the wishes of the majority of the Cherokee nation that desired to maintain their lands. The cession that Double Head agreed to created disharmony in Cherokee society and his assassination was a limited response to restore harmony. In this way, the Cherokee men that participated in his assassination, the decision and action, fulfilled the good man ideal through their efforts to reestablish harmony and fulfill the wishes of their community.

The Upper Town headmen sent a clear message: while economic self-aggrandizement was an acceptable demonstration of Cherokee masculinity it could not be achieved at the expense of the Cherokees' communal land holdings, thus reflecting the continued power of women and matrilineages as landholders. While most Cherokees were leary of government officials, after the deals of Double Head were uncovered, most Cherokees believed that Meigs, an agent of the United States, prioritized the policy wishes of the federal government over the expressed desires of the Cherokees. Some headmen suggested that the Cherokees circumvent their agent and deal directly with the President to ensure fair treatment. The headmen from "Enolee" and "Cotestee" argued that Meigs endeavored to extinguish Cherokee claims to their lands so "the Agent can give it [Cherokee land] to whom he pleases, this is at once making us tenants of the whites and giving up our right to the lands long depended, and drenched with the blood of our forefathers for the benefit of their children." Cherokee men had a responsibility to future generations: "let not our children say their Fathers made them beggars by giving away their lands to the management of the whites and that they laid by the fire side when

they ought to have been serving their country like men.”⁶³ Thus, protecting the community from disharmony remained a principal marker of Cherokee manhood and a fulfillment of the good man ideal. Other masculine expressions also continued in the nineteenth century.

James Vann, a proponent of the new Cherokee masculine ideal of economic self-interest and diplomatic communalism, continued to embrace historic demonstrations of manhood, particularly in terms of the ball game.⁶⁴ The Cherokee ball game often referred to as the “little brother of war,” allowed men an opportunity to demonstrate their strength, stamina, and ferocity in a culturally acceptable way, outside of warfare.⁶⁵ In addition to allowing men to demonstrate their manhood, ball games also served as opportunities for headmen to discuss matters concerning the nation. Chiefs gathered at one ball game in Coosawattee discussed the settlement of the Moravians and declared that while “they did not have any ears” for Moravian’s religious teachings, the missionaries “should move into their towns and hold school” for their children.⁶⁶ People traveled great distances to attend ball games. In addition, to providing men opportunities to engage in the activities of men, including the game itself, as well as the gambling and political discussions that also occurred, ball games provided a recreational and social outlet for all Cherokees.

⁶³ To the Cherokee Chiefs from Enolee, Cotestee, November 20, 1802 Records of the Cherokee Indian Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

⁶⁴ James Vann frequently hosted ball plays at his residence, much to the chagrin of his Moravian neighbors. See *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. III, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2011), 1240-41.

⁶⁵ Raymond Fogelson, “The Cherokee Ballgame Cycle: An Ethnographer’s View,” and John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers* Vol. IV, edited by William L. Anderson, Jane L. Brown, and Anne F. Rogers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 43-48.

⁶⁶ *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. II, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2010), 573.

Ball games, due to the amount of alcohol typically consumed, proved to be rather rowdy gatherings.⁶⁷ Once the Moravians established themselves in Cherokee country, they complained of the disruptions that ball games brought to their lives. “Various Indians came to our house. they had come to the Ball-play and were looking for food. In the evening, we found a place in our field where the Indians had eaten all of our watermelons and had chewed our ears of corn.”⁶⁸ The missionaries typically embraced Cherokee expectations of hospitality, but they worried that the presence of drunkenness and other acts of revelry, including dancing and gambling, would influence their students negatively. They complained, “our children had their heads completely turned around, and many of them may have bewailed their lot which prevents them from taking part in such diversions.”⁶⁹ In addition to the ball game, missionaries also discouraged their students from attending Green Corn Dances.

In spite of missionary objections, and notwithstanding the advancements Cherokees made toward “civilization,” the Green Corn Dance remained an important festivity in Cherokee society. Parents frequently retrieved their children from the Moravian school so that they could return to their town to participate in this celebration. One man, Chuleoa, arrived at the school with his wife “in order to take Tommy home for the Green Corn Dance.” The missionaries communicated through James Vann’s wife that

⁶⁷ *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. IV, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2012), 1936-37. The missionaries described the ball plays as “times of drunkenness.”

⁶⁸ *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. II, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2010), 753.

⁶⁹ *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. IV, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2012), 1620. People came from 50-60 miles away, 1622.

they “were not happy to see this, because the boy might get into excesses and get completely out of his school routine.”⁷⁰ Chuleoa ignored the Moravians protestations, and in addition to taking Tommy, the man arranged to take all the students.⁷¹ Chuleoa’s actions demonstrate that even though some Cherokees accepted societal changes, particularly regarding the education of their children, the continuation of communal festivities remained a significant component of Cherokee society.

The degree to which Cherokees embraced tenets of the “civilization” program varied. Many Cherokee men simply did not embrace the new business-oriented masculine ideal demonstrated by The Ridge, James Vann, and others. A short-lived prophetic movement, or Ghost Dance Movement, sprang up among these Cherokees opposed to the cultural change they witnessed. The New Madrid earthquake that occurred in 1811 in Arkansas Territory exacerbated the anxieties created by “civilization” policies. The Cherokees learned of the destruction of this earthquake, most likely from their countrymen who migrated to the New Madrid area. They also physically felt the aftershocks of the quake and worried that the Creator was communicating displeasure.

⁷⁰ *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 279. According to the Moravians, the Green Corn Dance was “an annual communal celebration in this nation; it must not be confused with the private dance in families before the *first* new corn is eaten. Lengthy description of the dances in *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. II, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2010), 641-42.

⁷¹ *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. III, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2011), 954, 956.

The Cherokee response to both the earthquake and the cultural change of the early nineteenth century articulated itself in the Ghost Dance Movement.⁷²

In the late summer of 1811, Moravian missionaries reported, “For the last 6-8 months there have been constant dances, ballplays, and such things, so that some people are always traveling from one place to another for these amusements and for several months have hardly ever been at home.”⁷³ In addition to dances, ball games, and other communal gatherings, several Cherokees reported receiving visions. One Cherokee received a vision while hunting, as he followed tracks a voice called to him, “There are few deer this year!—and the man who lives in the clouds is angry at the Indians, because they are killing each other.”⁷⁴ The voice the man heard drew a cause and effect relationship between Cherokee behavior and the lack of game.

Another group of Cherokees received a vision in which “a whole host of Indians” riding “on small black horses” informed the Cherokees “God is dissatisfied that you so indiscriminately lead the white people onto my land.” The messengers mentioned the dwindling game and chided the Cherokees for planting “white people’s corn.” The messengers instructed “Go and buy it back from them and plant Indian corn and pound it

⁷² “Introduction,” *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 39; William McLoughlin “The Cherokee Ghost Dance Movement” in *The Cherokee Ghost Dance: Essays on the Southeastern Indians, 1789-1861*, edited by William G. McLoughlin, Walter H. Cosner, and Virginia Duffy McLoughlin (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1984), 111-47; William McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 168-85; Conevery Bolton Valencius, *The Lost History of the New Madrid Earthquakes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).

⁷³ *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. IV, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2012), 1610.

⁷⁴ *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 309-10.

according to your ancestors' ways. Make the people go away. The mother of the nation has left you, because all her bones are being broken through the milling." According to these messengers the Creator was displeased with the Cherokees for their adoption of white culture and punished them by depriving the people of game and the spiritual presence of the "mother of the nation." In addition to chastisement, these spiritual messengers promised that the "mother of the nation" would return "if you get the white people out of the country and return to your former way of life." The messengers went on:

You yourselves can see that the white people are completely different from us. We are made from red earth, but they are made from white sand. You may always be good neighbors with them but see to it that you get your old beloved Towns back from them. Also your mother is not pleased that you punish each other severely. Yes, you whip until blood flows. Now I have told you what God's will is, and you should tell others.⁷⁵

These spiritual messengers encouraged the Cherokees to not only refuse to cede more land, but to also push white settlers out of areas previously held by the nation. This message also encouraged an end to Lighthorse law enforcement and a renewal of clan retaliation for misdeeds.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, Vol. I, edited by Rowena McClinton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 411.

⁷⁶ The Cherokee Lighthorse, first organized in 1798 lapsed in 1801 and was reconstituted by the Council in 1808, as a police force. It was originally created to discourage horse theft, but over time its jurisdiction extended to punishment in other crimes or offenses. Whippings, or lashings, were the primary mode of punishment inflicted by Lighthorse members. See William McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 44, 89, 139-40; Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 139.

The Lighthorse, originally created to prevent theft, evolved over time to fulfill many responsibilities of clan discipline and clan vengeance. As the Lighthorse's authority grew, the Cherokee government outlawed the historic practice of clan revenge. These two factors chipped away at the authority of women in Cherokee society. Women, as clan leaders, played a prominent role in decisions to retaliate for the loss of a clan member, and whether or not to replace the deceased clan member through an adoption or ritual torture and death. Depriving women of their historic gendered responsibilities and authority as clan leaders, and instead placing that power in the hands of men who were not kin threatened gendered balance in Cherokee society. It is no surprise then that Cherokee prophets would understand the tremors that they felt to be tangible evidence that the societal changes occurring among the Cherokees were disrupting their world and causing disharmony. It is also no coincidence that the deity in the Ghost Dance prophecies was female—it was an effort to reassert the authority and power of women in Cherokee society and restore balance.

The Ridge, a Lighthorse veteran and rising politician, openly spoke against the visions and other revivalist aspects of the Ghost Dance Movement. One principal purpose of the Lighthorse was the protection of personal property: the visible representations of “civilized” Cherokee manhood. As an adherent to this new styled Cherokee masculinity The Ridge had a personal interest in quelling efforts to fight cultural change. The Ridge suggested the Cherokees look inward rather than outward for explanations to their own

bad behavior, arguing that drunkenness, theft, and the like caused the earthquake.⁷⁷ While the Ghost Dance Movement shared some similarities with other prophetic Native movements, it did not achieve the same success.⁷⁸ Even if the Ghost Dance movement originated from social anxieties about the decrease in feminine power at the expense of the new-fashioned Cherokee manhood, events soon distracted Cherokees and provided an opportunity for men to demonstrate their masculinity in a historic way.

While the Ghost Dance movement languished in 1811 and 1812, spiritual revivals were taking place in other Native nations, including among the Cherokees' neighbors, the Creeks.⁷⁹ A group of Creeks who embraced a prophetic movement that instructed Natives to return to historic practices and eschew the adoption of Anglo-American culture became known as the Red Sticks because they had raised the "red stick" or "red club" of war against their conciliatory chiefs. In the summer of 1813, a group of Red Sticks were attacked as they returned from Spanish Pensacola. The Red Sticks retaliated by attacking the fortified plantation of Samuel Mims in Alabama, killing approximately five hundred of the inhabitants of the fort. The United States called upon Andrew Jackson and others

⁷⁷ William McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 185.

⁷⁸ The Delaware prophet, Neolin, suggested a return to historic cultural practices and encouraged Natives to eschew Anglo-American goods and lifeways at the close of the French and Indian War. The Shawnee Tenskwatawa and his famous brother, Tecumseh, promoted a similar message in the early nineteenth century. Tenskwatawa received the vision for change and revival, and Tecumseh traveled through America encouraging other Native groups to embrace his brother's message. Tecumseh's efforts resulted in a short-lived Pan-Indian alliance, cut short by the American victory in the War of 1812. See Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

⁷⁹ For more on this period of nativist revivals, see Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*.

to punish the Red Sticks and quell their rebellion. Creeks opposed to the Red Stick movement and Cherokees assisted Jackson in his campaign against the Red Sticks.⁸⁰

Susan Abram asserts that Cherokees who fought alongside Jackson did so to demonstrate their commitment to both the United States and its prescribed “civilization” program. Cherokee men blended historic gendered motivations for warfare with American expectations, all in the hope that their contribution would be recognized and rewarded by the United States government through an eternal recognition of Cherokee sovereignty.⁸¹ While Cherokee political leaders surely saw the advantage of demonstrating their fealty to the United States, individual motivations most likely originated from historic gendered ideals and the possibility to achieve and prove one’s manhood through a widely recognized avenue. As a result, many Cherokee men were eager to participate in the conflict, and their involvement proved crucial to Jackson’s success against the Red Sticks.

Even though the Cherokee warriors acted in concert with Jackson’s army, they also acted in smaller groups with little to no direction from American commanders. In this way, these Cherokee warriors embraced historic warfare practices that allowed men to find their own chances to demonstrate their bravery and martial prowess.⁸² Cherokee commander Gideon Morgan wrote to the American agent to the Cherokees and detailed the great military efforts and successes of the Cherokee warriors. Morgan emphasized the

⁸⁰ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 117.

⁸¹ Susan M. Abram, *Forging a Cherokee-American Alliance in the Creek War* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2015), 1.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 64-65.

fact that the Cherokees were principally responsible for the recent military success, and “Will not shame redden the face and silence mute the tongue of those who have pretended to doubt the attachment of the Cherokees to our Country. They must not if they continue to murmur advance the real views, a thirst for their property and their lives.” Morgan’s words illustrate Abram’s argument that Cherokee leaders wanted to show American officials their value as an ally. Morgan stated that he could not name all of those that demonstrated their martial prowess, but he felt that it would “cool the ardor of the Cherokees to withhold the most prominent characters.” One such character was The Ridge.⁸³

The Ridge, former Chickamauga warrior and now plantation owner, was also present at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in March 1814, where Cherokee participation secured the defeat of the Red Sticks and ended their fight against the United States and fellow Creeks.⁸⁴ Throughout the Creek War, Cherokee warriors took Creek women and children prisoner, bringing them back to their homes to be adopted or kept as slaves. Cherokee men also captured African-American slaves, which allowed them to employ the gender ideals of “civilization” while also continuing historic Cherokee gendered occupations.⁸⁵ The Ridge, an example of the new-fashioned nineteenth-century Cherokee masculine ideal took advantage of this opportunity and distinguished himself in service earning the rank of Major. As discussed in Chapter I, Cherokee naming was a marker of a

⁸³ Gideon Morgan to Return J. Meigs, Fort Armstrong, November 23, 1813. Gideon Morgan Papers, Tennessee State Archives, Nashville TN.

⁸⁴ Susan Abram, *Forging a Cherokee-American Alliance*, 76-80; Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 118-19.

⁸⁵ Susan Abram, *Forging a Cherokee-American Alliance*, 65-67, 74, 88-89.

male's progression from adolescence to manhood. The Ridge was a name granted to the warrior after his participation in Chickamauga raids, not the name his mother gave him at birth. The significance of The Ridge's participation in the Creek War to his evolving masculine identity is evident in his name after the conflict: he was henceforth known as Major Ridge. His name, much like his expression of manhood was a blend of culturally distinctive Cherokee elements and a selection of Anglo-American gender models.⁸⁶

Cherokee men, like Major Ridge, who embraced the new masculinity, more often than not, were also influential politicians within the Nation. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, these leading men began centralizing the Cherokee government. Laws were enacted that promoted the acquisition of private property and undercut matrilineal inheritance. Historically, material possession reverted back to the matrilineal household upon an individual's death. New laws allowed Cherokee men to leave their assets to their children.⁸⁷ The Lighthorse, a Cherokee policing force, was organized to protect private property and punish those who broke laws. The establishment of the Lighthorse challenged and ultimately replaced the role of clans as dispensators of justice.⁸⁸ These types of legislative acts significantly weakened the role of clans in Cherokee society. However, evidence suggests that even though lawful practices changed on paper, some Cherokees, following the good man ideal, continued to police and regulate themselves in

⁸⁶ Susan Abram, *Forging a Cherokee-American Alliance*, 104. Major Ridge was also very proud of his blue uniform jacket, and was sure to wear it at all public functions.

⁸⁷ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 140-41.

⁸⁸ The Lighthorse became an official organization in 1808. William McLoughlin, *The Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 44, 89, 139-140; Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 139.

historic ways. For instance, clan revenge, or blood law, was officially outlawed in 1810. But when answering a series of questions about Cherokee culture, Cherokee agent Return Meigs suggested that blood law remained the preferred method of retribution. He stated, “They think it not only right; but necessary & very honorable to retaliate & take ample revenge.”⁸⁹ Clan revenge was a historic responsibility that Cherokee men had to maintain harmony, and this practice also reinforced the importance that women had in Cherokee society as clan leaders.⁹⁰

It is difficult to ascertain the degree to which blood law and other historic cultural practices continued, but it seems obvious that many Cherokees simply ignored the aspects of “civilization” that they did not perceive as beneficial. The new expressions of masculinity embraced by elite Cherokee men including a new constitutional government, the acquisition of personal property, and the establishment of a newspaper sought to fulfill the good man ideal by maintaining harmony in Cherokee communities by strengthening their sovereignty. Many Cherokee men believed that if they could demonstrate to American government officials that they succeeded in the scheme of “civilization” then the federal government would acknowledge Cherokee sovereignty and protect the nation from the incursions and pressures of American settlers. This belief is best seen in the Cherokee census published in 1828.

⁸⁹ Return J. Meigs, “Answers to enquiries relating to the Cherokees, August, 1817,” The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 15, 2014.

⁹⁰ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 151.

In order to demonstrate to American officials their societal and cultural advancement, the Cherokees voted to conduct a census in 1824. The results were published in the *Cherokee Phoenix*. Editor Elias Boudinot stated, “Our object in inserting the following tables which we copy from a pamphlet is to show that, if possessions can be considered as indicating the progress of civilization, some of the Districts are considerably farther advanced in improvement than others.”⁹¹ The Cherokees hoped this census would provide additional evidence of their advancement in “civilization.” The 1828 census is illuminating as the categories the Cherokees measured reveal much about what they valued within the “civilization” program and how they viewed their advancement in this encouraged scheme of cultural change.

Some districts outpaced others in categories of slave ownership, intermarriage with whites, and established businesses in 1828. Chattooga, for example, proved more “advanced” than others, in terms of slave and livestock ownership but did not greatly surpass other districts in the number of plows, looms, and wagons owned. According to the percentages, all districts experienced cultural change. The Cherokees lived under the influence of the United States’ government policy for approximately forty years at the time of the census. In 1828, they were at the height of their incorporation of Anglo-American lifeways before the Removal crisis. Ultimately, decisions to either embrace or

⁹¹ 1828 Cherokee Census, *Cherokee Phoenix*, Wednesday June 18, 1828 Vol. I, No. 17.

shirk the United States' "civilization" policy were both ways to combat colonialism in the Cherokees' struggle to maintain their sovereignty.⁹²

As mentioned earlier, historically Cherokee women were responsible for farming, but the federal government's "civilization" program dictated that men take up the role as land cultivators. In order to avoid women's work, some Cherokee men utilized slave labor. The Chattooga District had the largest percentage of slaves in the nation at 31 percent. In addition to the largest slave population, Chattooga also had two of the Nation's six cotton gins, and outpaced other districts in the number of cattle and horses owned. Even though things like cotton production and slave ownership were indicative of white southern identity, Cherokees integrated these features into their lives in culturally distinctive and specific ways. The districts with the largest populations of slaves also happened to be districts that held former Chickamauga settlements.⁹³ Chickamauga warriors frequently captured slaves during their raids on white settlements; therefore, when "civilization" policies were introduced, these men had an existing labor force that allowed them to refashion their masculine identities without disrupting historic gendered ideals and sources of spiritual power.

While some aspects of reconstructed Cherokee masculinity originated in historic gendered occupations, other aspects of change resulted in intriguing correlations. The Hickory Log District, for example, had the largest population of intermarried whites, including the largest number of white wives. Despite the "civilizing" influence of the

⁹² 1828 Cherokee Census, *Cherokee Phoenix*, Wednesday June 18, 1828 Vol. I, No. 17.

⁹³ Ibid.

white spouses, Hickory Log residents had the smallest herds of livestock, the least number of looms, and other household implements. Conversely, the Cherokees in the Coosawatee District had the second largest population of intermarried whites, and also owned the second largest percentage of the Nation's slaves. According to these figures, Cherokee men in Hickory Log and Coosawatee labored in ways that were appropriate for their gender and cultural expectations (with one group seemingly refusing to farm and another utilizing slave labor to farm), but the large number of white wives indicates a significant shift in the way that Cherokees in these districts formulated their identities.⁹⁴ Historically, because the Cherokees were a matrilineal society, individuals could not be considered a Cherokee unless they had a Cherokee mother (either biological or adoptive). Cherokee men were not historically an active participant in their children's lives and upbringing, and were not technically considered family. The willingness of Cherokee men in these two districts to marry white women and risk the societal acceptance of their children is striking, and one of the most significant markers of cultural change during the early nineteenth century.

Cherokee law continued to evolve during the 1820s, and in 1825, the council voted to recognize the children of Cherokee men and white women as Cherokees. Most likely, the desire to pass this law depended greatly on the marriage of John Ridge and his cousin, Elias Boudinot to white women from New England. The nation placed great hope in the ability of the younger generation of men, educated in American schools, fluent in

⁹⁴ 1828 Cherokee Census, *Cherokee Phoenix*, Wednesday June 18, 1828 Vol. I, No. 17.

English, and archetypes of Anglo-American “civilization,” to effectively represent the nation to American political officials and protect Cherokee sovereignty. John Ridge and Elias Boudinot were leading men of their nation—their children needed recognition as Cherokees. As the citizenship laws changed, John Ridge and Elias Boudinot set an example for a new masculine ideal embraced by others, as is evidenced in the 1828 census in the Hickory Log and Coosawatee districts.⁹⁵

Despite the fact that many of the laws passed by the Cherokee Council promoted the new “civilized” gender ideals, the efforts of the Council to maintain historic land ownership is also evident. The federal government hoped that Cherokee acceptance of “civilization” would result in privately owned parcels of land. Jefferson, for instance, hoped the Cherokees would also become yeoman farmers. In many visible ways, Cherokee men and women adopted aspects of Anglo-American culture, but a change in land ownership practices never took place. Instead, the Cherokee government reaffirmed communal ownership of land in 1817 and 1822, as well as their united refusal to future land cessions.⁹⁶ The Cherokees believed that they stood a better chance of maintaining their sovereignty if they held their land in common, rather than running the risk of symbolically bleeding to death from the tiny cuts attendant with the sales of smaller, privately owned land parcels. As the assassination of Doublehead and Cherokee legislation demonstrate, the new version of Cherokee masculinity encouraged the

⁹⁵ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 147-48.

⁹⁶ In 1822 the Cherokees voted to apply the death penalty to unlawful land cessions. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 155.

acquisition of material possessions and focus on self but also required that Cherokee men attend to the whole nation in their political and diplomatic endeavors, thereby fulfilling the good man responsibility to prevent disharmony in Cherokee society. Throughout the nineteenth century, federally recognized Cherokee sovereignty became the surest way to ensure harmony in Cherokee society.

The pressures of nineteenth-century American colonialism and its attendant “civilization” program encouraged an evolution in the Cherokee masculine ideal. Cherokee masculinity continued to be a shaper of Cherokee identity during the early nineteenth century, as seen in the lives of former Chickamauga warriors turned successful businessmen like Major Ridge. These men were motivated by the Cherokee cultural requirement that men openly demonstrate their masculinity. Their embrace of “civilization,” through the acquisition of plantations, ferries, and other businesses allowed these former warriors to demonstrate their gendered power in a way available to them. Even though these men represented a minority of Cherokees, they were a minority who would come to lead the Nation in the decades that followed; therefore, it is crucial that we understand the cultural motivations for the changing notions of manhood they embraced, and how their expressions of masculinity competed with preexisting models. This contestation between more Anglo-American and earlier eighteenth-century Cherokee ideals of manhood continued through the nineteenth century and resulted in tension between men at times. However, many Cherokee men wished to separate themselves from the “civilizing” efforts of the federal government and other Cherokees.

These men moved west to the Arkansas River Valley to either pursue historic gender ideals or to continue in the new ideal away from the American settler encroachment in Cherokee country.

CHAPTER IV

“RECENTLY IMIGRATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO ARKANSAS RIVER”: CHEROKEE MASCULINITY, IDENTITY, AND VOLUNTARY MIGRATIONS, 1785-1833

Cherokees slowly began migrating west in the closing decades of the eighteenth century when the Spanish gave permission to the first Cherokee migrants to settle along the St. Francis River to act as a buffer against the Osage. Cherokees continued to relocate west of the Mississippi River through the early nineteenth century and, by 1811, the largest settlement in Arkansas was a Cherokee settlement. By 1820, one third of the Cherokee population resided in Arkansas Territory.¹ This chapter examines these Arkansas Cherokees, the reasons for their voluntary migrations, and the impact these decisions had on expressions of manhood.

In 1785, the Cherokees signed their first treaty with the United States. The Hopewell Treaty redefined Cherokee land holdings and placed the Cherokees “under the protection” of the United States government.² According to future chief of the Arkansas Cherokees, John Rogers, a “portion of the Cherokee people, not willing to comply with the requisitions” of the Treaty of Hopewell “formed a settlement” on the St. Francis

¹ Conevery Bolton Valencius, *The Lost History of the New Madrid Earthquakes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 72.

² Treaty with the Cherokees, November 28, 1785, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904).

River “in the Spanish province of Louisiana.”³ According to Rogers these Cherokees “withdrew themselves, not only from their own nation, but beyond the limits of the United States.”⁴ These emigrating Cherokees hoped to not only escape Anglo-American settlers encroaching on their lands in the east, but by relocating west of the Mississippi River and outside the bounds of the new nation, they hoped to permanently escape the land and societal pressures of the United States and continue their historic cultural practices, including gender expressions.

Cherokees who remained in the east received promises from government officials that they would prevent future settler incursions in exchange for Cherokee cessions to existing white squatters. White settlers continued to press their way onto Cherokee land holdings, and in 1804 Cherokee agent, Return Meigs, attempted to acquire yet another land cession.⁵ Meigs attempted to encourage this cession through the language of “civilization.” According to their agent, “the money & goods which [the Cherokees] will receive for the lands” better served the interests of the Indians “than the lands” itself.⁶ The pattern of relieving Cherokees of their land holdings continued in successive treaties in 1805 and 1806.⁷ Meigs and many other government officials believed that lesser land holdings stifled the attractiveness of the hunt and enabled the Natives “to make still a

³ Memorial of John Rogers to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, April 13, 1844, 3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Treaty with the Cherokees, October 24, 1804, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904).

⁶ War Department to Return J. Meigs, April 23, 1804, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs.

⁷ Treaty with the Cherokees, October 25, 1805, and Treaty with the Cherokees, January 7, 1806, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904).

greater progress in the useful arts,” and rely more “on Agriculture and domestic manufactories for their support and of course become a happier people.”⁸ These continued pressures by the federal government to cede land and undergo vast cultural change led a number of Cherokees to relocate.

Many of these migrating Cherokees were former Chickamauga warriors. Even though they ultimately lost their war against America and its citizens in the early 1790s, many former Chickamauga warriors were disinclined to cease their historic gendered occupations and opted to migrate to the Arkansas Valley.⁹ Spanish permissions to Cherokees to settle west of the Mississippi River began in 1788, with successive resettlement grants approved by the Spanish in 1790, 1794, 1796, and 1797.¹⁰ Most of these individuals migrated from Chickamauga towns, or were led by Chickamauga headmen. The Spanish were keen to allow Cherokee resettlement as they hoped that the presence of the Cherokees “would serve as a barrier against the Americans who might attempt to cross the river” into Spanish Louisiana (see Figure 3), and also protect Spain’s other Native allies “from the forays of the Osages.”¹¹ Chickamauga warriors answered the call of Spanish officials throughout the 1790s to protect Spain’s interests from outside

⁸ War Department to Return J. Meigs, April 23, 1804, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs.

⁹ Gregory D. Smithers, *The Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 49. Robert A. Myers, “Cherokee Pioneers in Arkansas: The St. Francis Years, 1785-1814,” *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Summer, 1997), 129.

¹⁰ Robert A. Myers, “Cherokee Pioneers in Arkansas: The St. Francis Years, 1785-1814,” 134-35, 141, 143.

¹¹ Baron de Carondelet to Don Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, New Orleans, December 18, 1792. In *Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794*, Vol. IV, ed. Lawrence Kinnaird (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office), 106.

threats, especially encroaching Americans. In 1795, for example, Bloody Fellow traveled to New Madrid “to help defend that Post against . . . Enemies.”¹² Due to the continued alliance between the Chickamaugas and Spain, Spanish officials were happy to approve to Cherokee settlement requests.



Figure 3. Spanish Louisiana.¹³

Overall, the individual reasons for Cherokee migration west of the Mississippi River were varied. Some desired to put distance between themselves and an encroaching, sizeable, white population, others fled their eastern homes because political fallouts threatened their lives. In both cases, western migration offered a lifestyle predicated more on eighteenth-century gender ideals than nineteenth-century Anglo-American models. In the Arkansas and Missouri Territories, societal structures and economies differed greatly

¹² Gayoso to Carondelet, Natchez, January 8, 1795, *East Tennessee Historical Publications*, No. 42 (1970): 104.

¹³ Map created by Jamie Mize utilizing Google Maps.

from those east of the Mississippi for Indians and Euro-Americans alike.¹⁴ Migrants to these territories engaged in subsistence farming and small-scale husbandry, but most importantly in trapping, hunting, and the fur trade.¹⁵

West of the Mississippi River, Cherokee men continued eighteenth-century traditions of hunting and warfare.¹⁶ Gender dictated the roles that women and men performed in Cherokee society. Gendered responsibilities, such as social and economic activities were supported by the separate roles ascribed to Selu and Kana'ti in Cherokee cosmology. Selu and women provided corn, and by extension held spiritual and gender power through their ability to produce life (both human and plant). Kana'ti was a hunter; therefore, Cherokee men provided food from their hunts. In this way, men held spiritual and gender power through their ability to take life away. With Selu and Kana'ti as examples, Cherokee men and women performed specific gendered roles in their communities from which they obtained and demonstrated their spiritual power. These activities and sources of power were created and maintained with balance between men

¹⁴ I have used "Euro-American" because many of the settlers in the Arkansas Valley at the turn of the century were French and Spanish. Their life-ways and interactions with Natives differed from the settler colonialism pursued by "Anglo-Americans."

¹⁵ Gregory Smithers, *The Cherokee Diaspora*, 49-50; Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 198; Conevery Bolton Valencius, *The Lost History of the New Madrid Earthquakes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 76.

¹⁶ Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 198. For general discussions on Cherokee gender roles see: Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 13-15. Theda Perdue argues that "balance" was a central theme that impacted the framework of Cherokee society. For additional sources of gender roles and the expression of these roles see: Susan Abram, "Real Men: Masculinity, Spirituality, and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Cherokee Warfare," and Greg O'Brien in *Choctaws in a Revolutionary Age, 1750-1830* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), xxiv and in "Trying to Look Like Men: Changing Notions of Masculinity Among Choctaw Elites in the Early Republic." *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South* Craig Friend and Lorri Glover, eds. (University of Georgia Press, 2004).

and women in mind. The last eighteenth-century example of Cherokee attempts to create such an existence in the east is the formation of the Chickamauga towns, and they offer an instructive point of comparison for the Arkansas Cherokees, specifically the decision to move and the ritualistic nature of warfare.

In the late eighteenth century, Cherokees in Chickamauga towns attempted to maintain preexisting, eighteenth-century gender roles: men raided and hunted, and women remained in the towns tending to their cornfields and attending to other household responsibilities. The Chickamaugas ended their war with the United States in the 1790s, while the federal government simultaneously employed its plan of “civilization.” Cherokee men responded to the United States government’s plan of “civilization” in different ways: some embraced it; others attempted to avoid Anglo-American influences and persist in their individual towns; and still others chose to relocate west of the Mississippi. In each of these three choices we see the employment of the good man ideal and avoidance of disharmony. In order to avoid disharmony, “the good man ideal,” as described by anthropologist Fred Gearing, encouraged Cherokee men to “assert their interests cautiously,” “quietly go his own way,” and if conflict still cannot be avoided “a good Cherokee withdraws from it—physically.”¹⁷ While the first Cherokee migrants might have been attempting to avoid disharmony, the St. Francis River area in which they settled, was also attractive due to the amount of game in the

¹⁷ Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors: Social Structures for Cherokee Politics in the 18th Century” *The American Anthropological Association*. Memoir 93 vol. 64, no. 5 (October, 1962), 31-32.

area.¹⁸ According John Rogers, those that preferred “maintaining the hunter state . . . preferred a removal to the country beyond the Mississippi, as better adapted to their favorite pursuit.”¹⁹ As Rogers makes clear, the availability of deer and other animals meant that the dominant eighteenth-century masculine expression of hunting could continue unabated.

The importance of hunting is reflected in probate records from the Missouri Territory, which give the details of people’s possessions at the time of their deaths. These records illustrate the nature of Arkansas Valley economies in the early nineteenth century and demonstrate fluidity between the various peoples and cultures. Estate inventories often included trade items, such as “steel traps,” “beads,” “colored plumes,” “skins,” and articles of clothing.²⁰ These items indicate that the fur trade was the primary economy for the Missouri and Arkansas Territories in the early nineteenth century. In many cases the decedents were French.²¹ The prevalence of French merchants and their close

¹⁸ Conevery Bolton Valencius, *The Lost History of the New Madrid Earthquakes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 70, 76.

¹⁹ John Rogers, Memorial, 3-4.

²⁰ Probate Record for Peter Saffrey and Francis Contemly, New Madrid, December 1806 in Missouri Judicial Records Historical Database. s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/JudicialRecords/Default.aspx. Accessed March 18, 2015; Probate Record for Jean Baptiste Barsaloux, New Madrid, February 1807 in Missouri Judicial Records Historical Database. s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/JudicialRecords/Default.aspx. Accessed March 18, 2015.

²¹ “Certificate of Anthony Campbell that papers of deceased deposited with William Webber and Kanieteugh, Cherokee Chief[s]. Both decedents are also listed as “French Indian trader[s].” See Probate Record for Peter Saffrey and Francis Contemly, New Madrid, December 1806 in Missouri Judicial Records Historical Database s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/JudicialRecords/Default.aspx. Accessed March 18, 2015; Jean Baptiste Barsaloux is described as a “French merchant and Indian trader.” See Probate Record for Jean Baptiste Barsaloux, New Madrid, February 1807 in Missouri Judicial Records Historical Database s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/JudicialRecords/Default.aspx. Accessed March 18, 2015; “Some property belonged to Kincheloe, an Indian.” See Probate Record for Elish Evans, New Madrid, April 1808 in Missouri Judicial Records Historical Database. s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/JudicialRecords/Default.aspx. Accessed March 18, 2015.

connections with Indian hunters living in the area fostered an economy predicated on the fur trade, and this pattern remained the case until the close of the first decade in the nineteenth century.

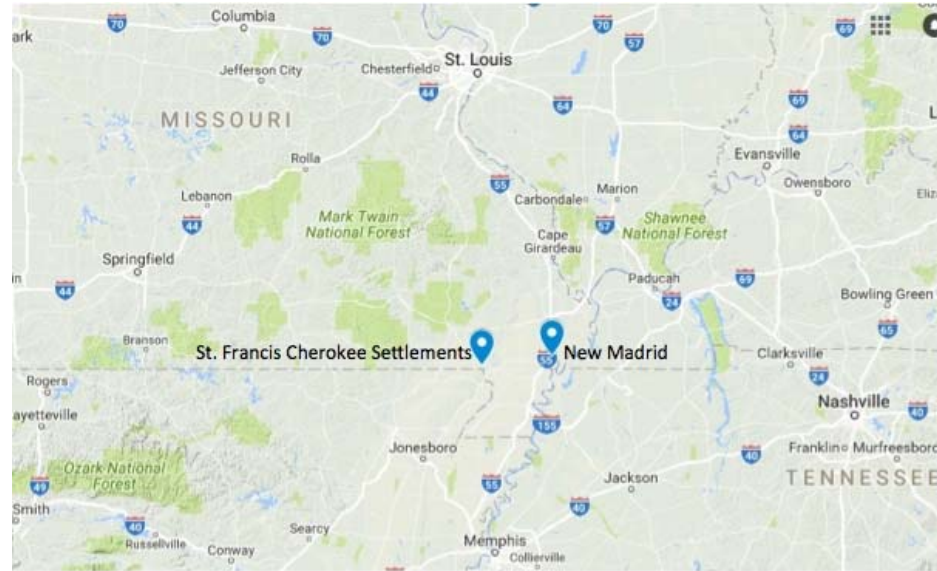


Figure 4. St. Francis Cherokee Settlements and New Madrid.²²

In 1806, Cherokee chief, Connetoo, stated “that on the St. Francis [the Cherokees] amount to about six hundred souls—though only ten years have elaps’d since himself with Nine other Families and a few young Men first cross’d the Mississippi, to take up their residence in this neighbourhood.”²³ Connetoo originally traveled to Spanish Louisiana in 1796, and after the Quapaws refused a Cherokee settlement by them on the Arkansas River, Spanish officials granted Connetoo and others permission to establish

²² Map created by Jamie Mize utilizing Google Maps.

²³ John B. Treat to Secretary at War Dearborn, Arkansas, December 31, 1806 in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Volume 14, Louisiana-Missouri Territory, 1806-1814, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter, (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, DC, 1949), 57.

their residences on the St. Francis River (see Figure 4). William Webber, a well-known Chickamauga figure, followed Connetoo to Spanish Louisiana the following year and settled first along the St. Francis, and then the Arkansas River after the New Madrid Earthquake in 1811 forced Cherokees to relocate.²⁴ Together, Connetoo and William Webber developed a lucrative trading business. Much like Major Ridge and others living in the east, Connetoo and Webber were much wealthier than the majority of white settlers who moved to the Arkansas Territory and crowded onto Cherokee land claims.²⁵

While Connetoo and Webber both followed the good man ideal of pursuing their own course without frustrating the efforts of others, it is also possible that like the migrations of the Chickamaugas, Connetoo and Webber hoped to promote their particular vision for a Cherokee future and encourage others to follow their lead. Throughout the 1790s, other Cherokees (principally Chickamaugas) migrated west.²⁶ Not all Cherokees, however, were enticed by the abundance of game and lack of white settler encroachment in Spanish Louisiana. Cherokee headman Little Turkey, informed Spanish officials in 1796 that he had no intention of relocating west of the Mississippi River, as he believed “his Nation will be able to retain the little that remains of the Lands of the East Side for Sometime to Come.”²⁷ Even though Little Turkey was not persuaded, small numbers of

²⁴ Robert A. Myers, “Cherokee Pioneers in Arkansas,” 142. Willstown, a prominent Chickamauga town in present-day Fort Payne, Alabama was named after William Webber. The St. Francis River Valley was the epicenter of a series of earthquakes that happened between December 1811 and February 1812 known collectively as the New Madrid Earthquake.

²⁵ Ibid., 148-50.

²⁶ Ibid., 141-44.

²⁷ William Panton to Baron de Carondelet, Pensacola, July 25, 1796, in “Papers Relating to Georgia-Florida Frontier,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (September, 1940), 263. Little Turkey’s

Cherokees decided to leave their eastern homes, reestablish themselves on the St. Francis River, and practice historic gendered occupations. It is significant to note that while some men traveled west alone, Connettoo and others refer to migrating Cherokee population figures in terms of “families.”²⁸ As discussed with the relocation and establishment of Chickamauga towns, women were the heads of household, and men could not force them to reestablish their homes if they did not desire to do so.

In addition to permanent relocations, some Cherokee men traveled across the Mississippi River to war with the Osage and returned to their villages afterward. Thomas Jefferson admonished the Cherokees for such behavior, stating that Cherokee “young men” spent too much of their time engaged in war. Jefferson continued “Some of them cross the Mississippi to go and [illegible] people who never did them any injury—My Children, this is wrong and must not be.” The President stated that Cherokee war parties would incite the Osage and others to travel east to take revenge; however, Jefferson was not concerned about his Indian children. Instead, he worried most about white settlers caught in between the violence. “Young men going to War are not easily restrained,” stated Jefferson “Finding our people on the River, they will rob them, perhaps kill them.” The Cherokees, according to the President, needed to prevent their men from traveling to

discussion with Spanish officials also revealed that William Webber “made a great mistake in saying that he was authorized by him [Little Turkey] to solicit Land for the Cherokees to settle on West of the Mississippi.” It is difficult to say whether Webber hoped to encourage Little Turkey and others to relocate to Spanish Louisiana through his maneuver, or if he surreptitiously attempted to gain more land for himself by promising that Little Turkey and others planned to relocate also.

²⁸ Examples include: Governor Wilkinson to the Secretary of State, St. Louis, September 22, 1805 in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Volume 13, Louisiana-Missouri Territory, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter, 228. John B. Treat to Secretary at War Dearborn, Arkansas, December 31, 1806 in *The Territorial Papers*, Volume 14, 57.

war with the Osage. If they did not, Jefferson warned that another war, “between us and you” would be the consequence.²⁹ Despite Jefferson’s warnings, some Cherokees continued to travel west to war with the Osage, while others relocated permanently. Both relocation and traveling war parties offered Cherokee men opportunities to continue historic gender roles. Relocation in particular extended an economic prospect, through the fur trade, and the ability to express political dissent without creating conflict. Through voluntary migration, Connettoo and others pursued their own course in a culturally appropriate way.³⁰

Cherokees who remained in the east accepted the smaller-scale migrations made by their countrymen at the turn of the nineteenth century, as they did not involve the forfeiture of tribal lands in the east and did not threaten, Cherokee sovereignty. The United States government first placed pressure on the Cherokees to move west of the Mississippi during Thomas Jefferson’s presidency. In 1808, the President suggested that he was happy to facilitate a solution for Cherokee men that “still chuse to continue the hunter life.” The government, according to Jefferson, welcomed these men “on our lands beyond the Mississippi, where some Cherokees are already Settled, and where game is plenty, and we will take measures for establishing a Store there among them, where they may obtain necessaries for their Peltries, and we will Still continue to be their friends,

²⁹ A Talk from the President, Thomas Jefferson, to the Chiefs of the Cherokee Nation, delivered on January 10, 1806, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs, M-15, National Archives.

³⁰ This is supported by Fred Gearing’s “good man ideal.” See: Fred Gearing, “Priests and Warriors, 31-32.

there as much as here.”³¹ In the first decade of the nineteenth century, the United States government had yet to give up completely on its plan of “civilization,” but as Jefferson’s talk illustrates, United States officials were warming up to the idea of removal.

Somewhat ironically, Jefferson highlighted the possibility that Cherokee men could retain older notions of proper masculine behavior by hunting while simultaneously encouraging all Cherokees to adopt “civilization.” Clearly, the primary concern of the United States was the acquisition of eastern Cherokee lands. As a result, Meigs, at the behest of the federal government, encouraged an exchange of lands—those in the east for tracts in the west. While the majority of Cherokees seemed little concerned about the relocation of Connettoo and others, once relocation of some meant loss of land by many, opinions regarding migrations west grew increasingly impassioned.³²

In 1808, a group of Cherokee headmen promoted the idea of an exchange of Cherokee lands for tracts west of the Mississippi River. One of these men, Glass (*Tauquotihee*), a former Chickamauga warrior, had long protested white settlers’ encroachment. Glass was an original supporter of the Chickamauga relocation and moved with Dragging Canoe and others to the initial settlements on Chickamauga Creek.³³ Once the Chickamaugas relocated further south to the area around present-day Chattanooga,

³¹ Thomas Jefferson to the chiefs of the Upper Cherokees, May (on or before the 5th due to the date of the proceeding letter) 1808, Records of the Office of Secretary of War, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs, M-15. Also in *Records of the Moravians*, Vol. III, edited by C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck (Tahlequah: Cherokee National Press, 2011), 1206-7.

³² Sovereignty lay at the heart of the debates surrounding voluntary migration, after the government introduced its policy of land exchange. Because the Cherokees held their land in common, cessions by individuals impacted the entire nation.

³³ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs: In the Wake of Empire* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1998), 63-64.

Tennessee, Glass made his residence at Lookout Mountain. Glass, like other Chickamaugas, employed the good man ideal and physically relocated from the political differences he had with conciliatory headmen in Overhill Towns and other historic regions. As colonial pressures continued in the nineteenth century, Glass likely sought to employ the good man ideal again through a voluntary migration to the Arkansas Valley.

Regardless of his intentions, Glass miscalculated. Removing oneself from conflict proved a less viable option for Cherokee men as the nineteenth century progressed. As seen in the previous chapter, men were increasingly encouraged to articulate their gendered power through a connection to the land. Historically, Cherokee women, as farmers and heads of household, fulfilled gendered expectations through an attachment to land, but aggressive American colonialism necessitated that Cherokee men also embrace this role. In the nineteenth century, Cherokee diplomats and politicians were expected to prove their manhood by protecting and retaining the land. Additionally, when Glass relocated with other Chickamaugas, his actions did not directly impact those who wished to remain in their historic towns. The scheme of land exchange promoted by the United States government that Glass embraced, however, held immediate implications for Cherokees throughout the nation. As a result of their suggestion, Glass and other headmen who promoted relocation were deposed by other council members.³⁴

³⁴ John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers*, vol. VI, ed. William L. Anderson, Jane L. Brown, and Anne F. Rogers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 419-20. Black Fox was later reinstated. See William McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 145-47. Glass will eventually join western Cherokees in 1817.

Cherokee headmen, including brothers, Tahlonteskee and Doublehead signed treaties with the United States that ceded Cherokee lands but provided themselves with reserves that could be sold or leased to white settlers.³⁵ Doublehead was executed for his actions, and cosigners to the treaty such as Tahlonteskee joined the Arkansas Cherokees. Tahlonteskee, like Glass and Doublehead, was a former Chickamauga warrior.³⁶ He was a war leader and continued to have influence in the Lower Towns after the Chickamaugas ended their hostilities with Americans in the 1790s. Even though Tahlonteskee lost his credibility in the east when he agreed to the land cession in 1806, he was recognized as a principal headman upon his arrival to the Arkansas Valley in 1810 and remained a respected leader until his death in 1819.³⁷

The actions of Tahlonteskee demonstrated that not all Cherokees fled from white settlers; some sought to remove themselves from political disagreements and potential violence. The assassination of Doublehead and deposition of Glass demonstrate the political tensions between the two eastern town regions: Upper and Lower. Tahlonteskee, Doublehead, and Glass were all Lower Town headmen. One of Doublehead's assassins and a vociferous opponent of a land exchange was an Upper Town headman, The Ridge. In addition to highlighting political differences between eastern Cherokees, these disagreements and acts of violence also say a great deal about competing masculine ideals. The Ridge embraced the newly fashioned Cherokee manhood predicated on an

³⁵ Federal officials bribed Tahlonteskee and Doublehead, along with other signers, in the negotiations of the 1805 and 1806 treaties. Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 92-95; William McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence*, 101-8.

³⁶ Tahlonteskee was the uncle of Chickamauga war leader John Watts.

³⁷ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 105, 113.

attachment to and defense of the tribal land and community. Tahlonteskee and Glass, however, attempted to continue in older masculine traditions, those built on individuality. While both Tahlonteskee and Glass were pushed to move west by different impetuses, they both migrated to an area in which Cherokee men maintained eighteenth-century gender roles through an active pelt trade and wars with neighboring Indians, particularly the Osage.³⁸

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact beginning of Cherokee-Osage hostilities. The conflict likely resulted from a competition for access to the fur trade in the Arkansas Valley when small numbers of Cherokee men began travelling west to hunt, as game depletion grew worse in the east.³⁹ In 1791, Spanish officials reported that a number of Cherokees planned to attend “a congress” of Native nations “to make an agreement to war upon the Osage.”⁴⁰ In a majority of the reported altercations between the Cherokees and Osage, the Cherokees acted in concert with other Indian groups. This changed, however, in the second decade of the nineteenth century when the New Madrid Earthquake of 1811 forced the Cherokees from the St. Francis to the Arkansas River (see Figure 5).⁴¹

³⁸ Tahlonteskee relocated to the Arkansas Valley area in 1810. The Glass appears as a headman in Arkansas in 1817.

³⁹ Gregory Smithers, *The Cherokee Diaspora*, 51; Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 103.

⁴⁰ Ygnacio Delino to Estevan Miro, Arkansas, March 4, 1791, in *Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794*, Vol. III, ed. Lawrence Kinnaird, 406.

⁴¹ For a complete study on the New Madrid earthquake see, Conevery Bolton Valencius, *The Lost History of the New Madrid Earthquakes*.

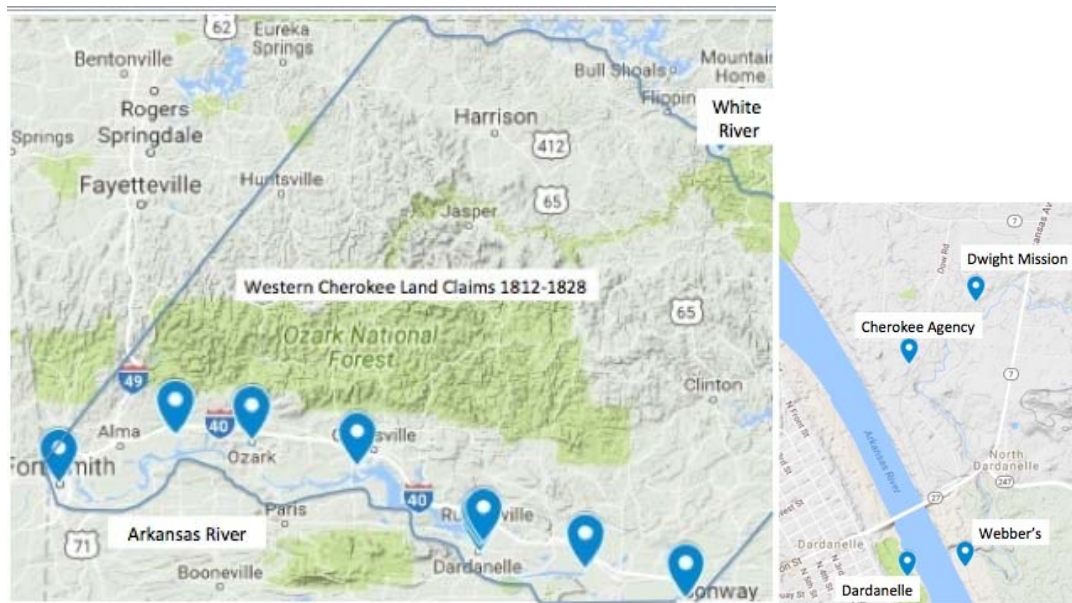


Figure 5. Western Cherokee Land Claims 1812-1828.⁴²

American engineer and land surveyor L. Bringier recorded a vision delivered by a Cherokee man named The Swan (*Skaquaw*) that followed the earthquake. The Swan told other western Cherokees of two children who came to him in a vision and delivered a message from the “Ever Great Spirit.”⁴³ According to the children messengers, the Great Spirit planned “to put an end to mankind . . . and save his children alone.”⁴⁴ The messengers told The Swan that the earth would shake “like a horse who shakes the dust

⁴² Maps created by Jamie Mize utilizing Google Maps. The markers on the map to the left are the approximate location of western Cherokee villages on the Arkansas River based upon the descriptions provided by observers such as L. Bringier, Thomas Nuttall, and the missionaries of the Dwight Mission. The map on the right provides greater detail of the Dardanelle area pinpointed on the larger map.

⁴³ L. Bringier, “Notices of the Geology, Mineralogy, Topography, Productions, and Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Regions Around Mississippi and Its Confluent Waters,” *American Journal of Science and Arts* 3 (1821), 40.

⁴⁴ L. Bringier, 40.

from his back.”⁴⁵ This shaking was a sign, and before the earth shook again, the children instructed The Swan “to move away from St. Francis before the next sign manifests itself.”⁴⁶ The Swan informed the Cherokees that they needed to travel west until they were “stopped by a big river which runs towards the sun rise.”⁴⁷ According to Bringier, a few months after The Swan delivered his prophecy, the St. Francis Cherokees “abandoned their farms” and relocated to the Arkansas River “where they occupy the river on both sides . . . the land they occupy is far the best on the Arkansas.”⁴⁸ This move, onto fertile lands along the banks of the Arkansas brought the Cherokees into closer proximity with the Osage and more violent and frequent attacks were the result.⁴⁹

A tract of land known as Lovely’s Purchase (see Figure 6) was a primary source of disagreement between the Osage and Cherokees. Lovely’s Purchase was significant to the Cherokees because it provided an outlet for them to reach the buffalo plains. As hunting was an important economic endeavor for many Cherokee men, access to buffalo hides and other furs was critical. In 1816 the Osage agreed to a land cession during negotiations with the Cherokee agent, William Lovely.⁵⁰ These cessions were also included in a formal treaty signed in St. Louis two years later. After this treaty, however, the Osage frequently complained that they never intended the lands to go to any Indians, especially the Cherokees. Instead, the Osage wanted white people to settle on Lovely’s

⁴⁵ L. Bringier, 40.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 41.

⁴⁹ For more on the impact of the Cherokees’ settlements on the Osage see: Kathleen Duval, *The Native Ground*, 196-226. Specific mention of the earthquake and Cherokee relocation on page 200.

⁵⁰ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 109.

Purchase, and “instruct them in husbandry.”⁵¹ In their conflict with the Osage, the Cherokees attempted to portray themselves as the most “civilized” of the two Native groups to United States officials in their attempt to gain the federal government’s support of their land claims along the Arkansas River.⁵² The Cherokees achieved success with this tactic, as the Osage complaint demonstrates. In this way, as the nineteenth century progressed, western Cherokees forged a masculine ideal that was a blend of old and new.



Figure 6. Lovely's Purchase.

Their conflict with the Osage allowed Cherokee men an opportunity to achieve and demonstrate their manhood in historically acceptable ways. In addition to warfare, western Cherokees also continued to express their manhood through hunting. In 1816

⁵¹ Governor James Miller to Secretary of War John Calhoun, Arkensaw, March 24, 1820, in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Volume 19, Arkansas Territory, 1819-1825, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1953), 153.

⁵² Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground*, 217-19.

Cherokee agent, Return Meigs lobbied on behalf of the western Cherokees to the United States government for the installation of a “Factory,” or trading station. Meigs relayed that the Cherokee men “are hunters, the women have not lost their love of spinning and weaving . . . and altho, the men make great hunts they cannot dispose of their Peltry &c but at great disadvantage.”⁵³ To alleviate this problem Meigs suggested “a Factory could be placed high up the Arkansas the Cherokees there & the remnants of tribes in that quarter would have a home, a rallying point.”⁵⁴ Even though Cherokees continued to hunt and provide for themselves and their families through the fur trade, a majority of Arkansas Cherokees had exposure to Anglo-American culture and adopted aspects that suited their economic and social interests.

Beginning in 1808, estate inventories demonstrated a change in economic pursuits, and by 1810 a significant change is revealed in the probate records. Fewer estates included trade goods, and the number of slaves (and their general inclusion in the records) grew. Additionally, the appearance of French names decreased and acreages increased.⁵⁵ This evidence suggests that when Cherokee men first arrived in the Arkansas Valley, at the turn of the nineteenth century, not only were they able to continue their historic gendered occupations, they also escaped the land hungry Anglo-American

⁵³ According to Meigs the factory would not only benefit the Cherokees, but also the other “tribes in that quarter, the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Delawares, the remains of the old Arkansas tribe, & Shawanoes” would also profit. See Return J. Meigs to Secretary of War, City of Washington, February 17, 1816, in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Volume 15, Louisiana-Missouri Territory, 1815-1821, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter, (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1951), 121-22.

⁵⁴ *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Volume 15, 121-22.

⁵⁵ Searched Probate Records for New Madrid from 1804 to 1820. See Missouri Judicial Records Historical Database s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/JudicialRecords/Default.aspx. Accessed March 18, 2015.

settlers attempting to dispossess them in the east. Over time the pressures of colonialism grew as more and more Anglo-American settlers arrived in the Arkansas Valley.

The western Cherokees' situation changed, as did that of all Indians located in Spanish Louisiana, in 1803 when the United States purchased the land. France reacquired this section of North America from the Spanish in 1800, and then sold the large swath of land in the Louisiana Purchase. The American government initially attempted to control settlement in their new territory, but government officials proved unable to stem the tide of Anglo-Americans establishing homesteads in the Arkansas Valley and other points west. As more settlers moved into the Missouri and Arkansas Territories, economic systems evolved. Hunting, trapping, and trade, while still pursued by some, were replaced by an agricultural based economic system. As the economic environment shifted around them, Cherokee men who previously shunned "civilization" slowly began to embrace Anglo-American farming practices and animal husbandry.

In 1812 and 1813 the Cherokees located west of the Mississippi River received goods from Cherokee agent Return Meigs. These shipments included supplies necessary for hunting and trapping including "beaver traps," "small hatchets," and "fish hooks." Other items, such as "20 strands of wampams" indicate that Native-to-Native diplomacy occurred between the Cherokee and their Indian neighbors. Items necessary for both hunting and war, such as "shot guns," "gun flints," "gun locks," and "gun powder" also made their way to the western Cherokees. Many items, however, were accoutrements of the "civilization plan" promoted by American officials. Such articles included "spinning

wheels,” “cotton cards,” “cow bells,” and “coffee,” indicating that Arkansas Cherokees were experiencing a period of economic and cultural change beginning in the second decade of the nineteenth century.⁵⁶

While Cherokee men did not completely abandon the hunt in the second decade of the nineteenth century, they expanded their herds of livestock and their farms. In both cases, an increasing number of Cherokees bred and cultivated quantities for sales in outside markets. Many cultivated cash crops with slave labor.⁵⁷ Former Chickamauga warriors that migrated to the Arkansas River brought with them a slave labor force they accumulated from their raids on American settlements in the 1790s. Through their large herds, farms, and slave labor force, and all the material trappings of wealth that the former brought them, these western Cherokee men also demonstrated masculinity in a relatively new way. This expression was similar to existing Anglo-American models, and Cherokees hoped to accentuate their “civilized” image in comparison to the Osage that continued to rely more heavily on hunting. Cherokees expected Americans to recognize and reward in their efforts to appropriate lands from the Osage.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ “Abstract of Disbursements made by Return J. Meigs Agent for the United States in the Cherokee Nation on account of Indian Department in the 4th Quarter of the Year 1812,” “Invoice of merchandize forwarded to that part of the Cherokee nation removed to the River Arkansa in charge of Samuel Riley an Interpreter in the Cherokee Agency 1811,” and “Invoice of Merchandise forwarded to that part of the Cherokee Nation removed to the river Arkansas in charge of John Ross 1812 Nov. 30th,” all located in The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&dbs=ZLNA_ Accessed June 16, 2014.

⁵⁷ Robert A. Myers, “Cherokee Pioneers in Arkansas,” 151.

⁵⁸ Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground*, 217-19.

Despite the disagreement over land cessions in the west between the Cherokees and the Osage, Cherokees continued to migrate. In 1817, Cherokee agent Return J. Meigs reported “recently imigrations have been made to Arkansas river,” and estimated the western Cherokee population to be around three thousand.⁵⁹ The United States government encouraged these migrations by offering land exchanges, compensation, and other material goods. The federal government consistently recognized Cherokee claims to land at the expense of the Osage. It is unlikely that the United States’ position emanated from a belief that the western Cherokees were more “civilized” than the Osage. Regardless of whether or not federal officials believed the Cherokee claims, the primary motivation to support Cherokee land claims was to encourage the Cherokees that remained in the east to move west. Then Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, stated as much when he promoted an end to Cherokee-Osage hostilities in favor of the cession of Lovely’s Purchase to the Cherokees, “as the President is anxious to hold out every inducement to the Cherokees, and the other Southern nations” to emigrate “West of the Mississippi.”⁶⁰ In the federal government’s nascent schemes for removal, varying levels of “civilization” between Native groups was of little consequence to Anglo-American beliefs of cultural superiority and rights to Indian land.

⁵⁹ Return J. Meigs to Mr. Trott, August 1817, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&db=ZLNA. Accessed June 16, 2014.

⁶⁰ John C. Calhoun to Governor Clark, Department of War, May 8, 1818, in *The Territorial Papers*, Volume 15, 391.

In the summer of 1817 the United States government achieved another cession of Cherokee land. General Andrew Jackson, General David Meriwether, and Tennessee Governor Joseph McMinn, met with Cherokee headmen from the east and the west, and concluded a treaty, which secured a voluntary exchange of lands for some Cherokees wishing to relocate west. To compensate the “poor warriors” that opted to emigrate, the federal government promised “one rifle gun and ammunition, one blanket, and one brass kettle, or, in lieu of the brass kettle, a beaver trap.” These items, according to the treaty, were “to be considered as a full compensation for the improvements which they may leave.”⁶¹ As previously demonstrated, Cherokee men in the east adopted the government’s “civilization” program in varying degrees, beginning in the 1790s, and western Cherokees experienced economic and cultural change beginning in 1810; therefore, the United States’ compensation for “poor warriors” did little to recompense Cherokee men who expressed their manhood in ways that increasingly blended hunting along with animal husbandry and farming. As Americans grew increasingly convinced during the nineteenth century that even a “civilized” Indian was still an Indian, federal officials sought to convert agrarian and mercantile Cherokee men back into “poor” hunters and warriors, at least on paper, to articulate a rationale for dispossession.

⁶¹ Treaty with the Cherokees, July 8, 1817. <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/che0140.htm>. Accessed September 5, 2015. The Cherokees successfully negotiated to allow women to also claim a kettle and a blanket, but governor McMinn made clear “the Kettles and Blankets given to the widows and Children form no part of the Treaty, but are presents made to your people as a sure mark of your Fathers Goodness and friendship toward the red people.” See Cherokee Council minutes, Friday May 22, 1818, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&dbs=ZLNA. Accessed June 16, 2014.

The United States left Cherokee emigrants poorly equipped to succeed in the Arkansas Valley, where Cherokees were also adopting Anglo-American farming techniques in greater numbers. In fact, a drought in 1817 impacted western Cherokee crops, and according to one observer, the consequences of the drought were “severely felt, and more particularly in consequence of the arrival among them of many ill-provided families of emigrants from the old nation.”⁶² In addition to their not-too-generous offer of compensation, the government also attempted to entice Cherokees to relocate with promises of “constancy, friendship, and protection.” President James Monroe vowed to a delegation of Cherokees visiting him in Washington that those resettled in the Arkansas Valley were in a safe place where “no other white man shall ever again disturb you.” Monroe promised that not only did emigration relieve Cherokees from the pressures of white settlers, the Natives had federally protected access to “a great outlet to the West” and the hunting and trapping available there.⁶³

Tennessee governor McMinn supported Monroe’s statements and assured the Cherokees that those emigrating would find the Arkansas Territory especially beneficial for those interested in hunting, due to the large amounts of “Buffaloo, Bears, and Deer, with all most every kind of game, in the greatest abundance.” McMinn then encouraged relocation in a way that belied the United States’ promotion of the Cherokees as solely hunters: “the Hunter, the Farmer, Trader, and those engaged in raising Stock, will be

⁶² Thomas Nuttall, *Nuttall’s Journal of Travels into the Arkansas Territory, October 2, 1818-February 18, 1820* (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1905), 181.

⁶³ McMinn to Meigs, January 18, 1818, Records of the Cherokee Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

essentially promoted, by a removal to the west of the Mississippi.” Regardless of which particular masculine ideal(s) a Cherokee embraced, his goals were best served in Arkansas. Government officials also encouraged the Cherokees to emigrate to avoid violence between the Natives and white settlers. If the Cherokees migrated, McMinn reasoned, the Natives and United States citizens would be “less liable to quarrels and Bloodshed.”⁶⁴ Even though government officials promised peace between the Cherokees and whites settlers if the Indians migrated, they did little to prevent conflict between the Cherokees and the Osage.

The Cherokee-Osage conflict, which most likely began in the 1790s, continued until 1822.⁶⁵ Historians have argued that throughout the eighteenth century, as a result of colonialism and the increase in warfare it brought, the ritual in Native warfare diminished.⁶⁶ While the nature of preparations for war and celebrations afterward, certainly changed, examples exist that indicate that warfare maintained some ritualistic features. Returning to the Chickamauga comparison, in Chickamauga towns traditional war speeches were held before parties left for raiding, and dances and celebrations were held when successful warriors returned. It is clear that the Chickamauga towns provided

⁶⁴ Joseph McMinn to the Cherokee Council, May 20, 1818, The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&dbs=ZLNA. Accessed June 16, 2014.

⁶⁵ Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground*, 224. Acts of violence between the Cherokees and Osage continued for a number of years after 1822, but they were sporadic and small in scale.

⁶⁶ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 90.

an outlet for Cherokee men to engage in familiar masculine acts, as well as have those acts validated and praised through scalp dances and celebrations.

This ritualized warfare also existed among the western Cherokees in their wars with the Osage. Before a Cherokee war party left to fight the Osage in 1815 “The war-cry was wafted to the neighboring village . . . followed by war-dances and songs, in which most of the tribe participated. Their songs were . . . an invocation . . . to the “Great Spirit” to protect them in battle.” When this war party returned successful, with thirty ponies and many scalps, they were “met by an escort of citizen Indians [that] chanted a song of welcome.” The “spoils of battle were equally distributed among the warriors and the other Cherokees [then] ensued a week of feasting, dancing, and rejoicing. When another expedition resulted in numerous Cherokee deaths in the spring of 1816, the returning warriors “were . . . met by a procession of mourners who wept and howled most piteously for the dead warriors who returned not.”⁶⁷ These two examples demonstrate the continued ritualization of warfare for western Cherokees. Much like the Chickamaugas, and other eighteenth-century eastern Native men, the western Cherokees engaged in warfare as a historic and familiar way to achieve and demonstrate their manhood, and have those demonstrations validated by their community.

Arkansas Cherokees were not the only Cherokee men that embraced the warrior masculine ideal; eastern Cherokees also participated in the war parties that attacked

⁶⁷ A.H. Abney, *Life and adventures of L.D. Lafferty: being a true biography of one of the most remarkable men of the great Southwest, from an adventurous boyhood in Arkansas, through a protracted life of almost unparalleled sufferings and hairbreadth escapes upon the frontier of Texas*, (New York: H.S. Goodspeed & Co, 1875). Funny anecdote: “Lynn who had remarkably sound and strong incisors” gnawed through all the captives’ ropes (47-48).

Osage villages. One notable example is the Cherokee attack on the Verdigris Osage in 1817.⁶⁸ According to a Cherokee oral tradition, “several hundred well-equipped and mounted [eastern Cherokee] men” answered the request of western messengers to assist in “decisively defeating” Osage.⁶⁹ The combined force of eastern and western Cherokees, through their consultation with “the medicine man or conjurer who accompanied the warriors,” spiritually prepared for the battle.⁷⁰ The medicine man pressed the thumbnail of each warrior “against a small white and almost transparent stone.” If the stone remained clear, the warrior “would not be injured during the process of battle.” The conjuring revealed serious wounds and possibly death lay in store for the warrior that caused a “blood-red streak” to appear on the stone.⁷¹ The Cherokee warriors marched along the Arkansas River and up the Verdigris after their spiritual preparations. Osage warriors were away from their village hunting for buffalo, and the combined Cherokee force showed no mercy in their attack on the unprotected village.

Led by headmen and war leaders, Tahlonteskee and Takatoka, the Cherokee warriors killed approximately fourteen men and sixty-nine women and children. The Cherokees looted the village for horses and other valuables and burned crops. In addition to this destruction, the warriors left the Verdigris with scalps and over a hundred

⁶⁸ These Osage received their name from the Verdigris River where their towns existed.

⁶⁹ Elizabeth Ross-story attributed to Archibald Campbell, August 30, 1937, *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>.

⁷⁰ Elizabeth Ross interview with S.W. Ross, November 9, 1937, *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>.

⁷¹ Elizabeth Ross interview with S.W. Ross. In both of the oral histories recorded by Elizabeth Ross the year given for the attack is 1818, but the events match with recorded attack of 1817.

prisoners.⁷² The Cherokees that returned with scalps and prisoners held physical evidence of their manhood and spiritual power. The Cherokees willingness to kill indiscriminately regardless of age and sex should not be viewed as a lack of manhood. The idea that certain individuals were not viewed as legitimate military targets emerged in Europe during the eighteenth century, and while Native peoples fought alongside Europeans and Americans for generations, they did not necessarily adopt all aspects of western martial culture. Women were frequently the victims of attack when Native groups raided each other. Oftentimes, this was because they were easy targets, but there is also a possibility that, among matrilineal groups, the killing of women held symbolic significance. Women represented their household families, clans, and ultimately the entire identity of the Native group, as inclusion was predicated on having a biological or adopted mother. Whether or not the Cherokee's attack represented opportunism, symbolism, or both cannot be known for sure, but the warriors were not lesser men in the eyes of their people because of it. In 1818, after this combined Cherokee attack, the Cherokees and Osage signed a treaty of peace with one another in St. Louis, but this peace proved temporary.⁷³

In March 1820, Arkansas Territory governor James Miller informed Secretary of War, John Calhoun that the Cherokees were preparing for war through "an invitation to Sarasan, one of the principal war chiefs of the Quapaws." These preparatory efforts were made in response to the discovery of "three [Cherokee] warriors murdered & robbed of

⁷² Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground*, 208-9; Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 111-12.

⁷³ For a discussion on the motivations for killing Native women see Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 87-88.

their furs by the Osages, and that some of their hunters were also missing, and supposed to be killed.”⁷⁴ Miller’s report provides evidence of the importance of both warfare and hunting to the western Cherokee men, in this particular instance we see these victims described as both warriors and hunters—historic signifiers of Cherokee masculinity.

In the summer of 1820, James Miller reported to John Calhoun, about his efforts to prevent an outbreak of war between the Cherokees and the Osage. Miller’s efforts stemmed from complaints Cherokees began making in February about Osage depredations, which resulted in the loss of men, furs, and horses. To prevent the Cherokees from sending a war party, Miller offered to go to the Osage and collect the alleged murderers. When Miller returned he found that not all the Cherokees were satisfied to wait on him to achieve a resolution. Miller stated:

Tick-a-toke an old Indian, called by [the Cherokees] the beloved man [was] dissatisfied and . . . for war; preparatory to which he had sent to several Tribes to come and join them. A small party of Caddos with a few Choctaws amounting to 30 to 40 in the whole arrived . . . all painted and ready for war.⁷⁵

Takatoka continued to express his manhood in historically grounded, culturally acceptable ways. The Osage killed a number of Cherokees, and in order to reestablish harmony, and fulfill their roles as men, Takatoka and the other Cherokee warriors wanted to respond through warfare, rather than the diplomacy of an American official.

⁷⁴ James Miller to John C. Calhoun, Arkensaw, March 24, 1820, in *The Territorial Papers*, Volume 19, 153-54.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 193.

The Cherokees reluctantly agreed to Miller's proposal, but insisted that four of their young chiefs accompany the governor to visit the Osage. Even though Takatoka was dissuaded from going to war, the importance that the Cherokee men control their response to the Osage is evident in the delegation that accompanied Miller. The Cherokees told Miller that these chiefs "were vested with full power to act for the Nation, and whatever they did would be agreed to by the Nation."⁷⁶ When Miller and the Cherokee delegation arrived at the Osage town, the Osage quickly confessed that some of their men had killed the Cherokees. The Osage informed Miller that they would gladly hand over the murderers because "they were bad men."⁷⁷ The Osage did protest, however, that the Cherokees "ought not to call on them to do justice without being willing to [do] Justice themselves."⁷⁸ According to the Osage, the Cherokees still held prisoners, which they were instructed to return in the 1818 treaty signed by Osage and Cherokee representatives in St. Louis. The Cherokees chiefs "confessed that they still had four . . . but observed that two were at school in Tennessee, one other with the Old Nation, and one child . . . which did not want to go back."⁷⁹ The Cherokees' adoption of the prisoners highlights a cultural continuity. As war captives, women and children were often adopted into Cherokee (and other Native's) families and clans during the conflicts of the eighteenth century and earlier to replenish clan members lost as a result of war or disease. Providing more evidence of combined Cherokee participation in the Osage wars,

⁷⁶ James Miller to John C. Calhoun, Arkansaw, June 20, 1820, in *The Territorial Papers*, Volume 19, 192.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

these Osage children, residing in the Old Nation arrived there with eastern Cherokee warriors.

A missionary traveling through the Chickasaw nation, in present-day Mississippi, in 1818 after the combined Cherokee attack on the Osage village, encountered a group of Cherokee warriors returning from Arkansas, where they fought against the Osage with the western Cherokee, to their homes in the east. The missionary visited their camp and discovered they held an Osage captive, a young girl “some three or four years old,” and that they intended to take the girl home and “hold her in bondage as a slave.”⁸⁰ When he inquired after her parents one Cherokee responded by holding up two scalps, informing the missionary that they belonged to the girl’s parents. The missionary raised funds to secure the girls freedom, and she was baptized Lydia Carter. Lydia was placed in a mission school in the east.⁸¹ This episode illustrates that despite the changing notions of masculinity adopted by Cherokees in the Old Nation, men continued to seek historic rites of passage to manhood. These Cherokee warriors expressed their masculinity by going to war. They then collected evidence—the scalps and Lydia—of their bravery and prowess to outwardly demonstrate their manhood to others. The warrior’s willingness to part with Lydia for money suggests that she was not needed to replace a lost clan member, but it was also possible that this warrior embraced the new Cherokee manhood practiced in the east and valued the status symbols he could acquire with the money. Either way, the act

⁸⁰ Reverend Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians, with a Biography of the Author by Rev. J. W. Moore* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication), Forgotten Books Reprint, 2015, 161.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 160-62.

of taking scalps and captives, reveals that some historic demonstrations of Cherokee manhood remained intact—even in the east.

Another child captive, a boy, also brought back to the Cherokee nation in the east by returning warriors, was placed in the Brainerd Mission School. John Ross acted to secure his release from his captors, and in gratitude the boy was named John Osage Ross.⁸² When the Arkansas Cherokees attempted to fulfill the Osage requests to return the children, they found many of the children unwilling to return west. According to the missionaries, the Cherokees treated these captive Osage children like their own, and as a result “many went back to their own people with great reluctance. A few utterly refused, and were allowed still to remain with the Cherokees.”⁸³ The examples of John Osage Ross and other unnamed Osage child captives illustrates that in many cases, unlike Lydia, Cherokee families adopted the Osage captives to replace lost family members and simply to boost their numbers. Cherokees in the east and the west captured and adopted Osage women and children during the years of intermittent warfare. Despite the government’s efforts to secure peace between the Osage and the Cherokees to promote a western migration for all Cherokees, the conflict continued, affording Cherokee men the opportunity to prove themselves in battle.

Sources regarding day-to-day experiences are scant, and generally provided by government officials. As such, these government officials reported on the matters that most interested them, namely trade and warfare. There is one account by Thomas Nuttall,

⁸² Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 162.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 166.

a botanist traveling through Arkansas Territory that provides details on Cherokee lifeways along the Arkansas River in 1819. The majority of Cherokees that Nuttall encountered embraced a blend of Native and Anglo-American culture. The Cherokees were thickly settled along both sides of the Arkansas River on land “generally elevated and fertile.”⁸⁴ While the Cherokees were clothed in “a mixture of indigenous and European taste,” their homes were “decently furnished,” and their farms “were well fenced and stocked with cattle.”⁸⁵ All signs to Nuttall that the Cherokees were “approach[ing] towards civilization.”⁸⁶ Even though these Cherokee men demonstrated their manhood in ways familiar to Nuttall and other Americans, they continued to rely on a gendered ideal that blended both historic traditions and new cultural introductions.

According to Nuttall, the Cherokees’:

superior industry, either as hunters or farmers, proves the value of property among them, and they are no longer strangers to avarice, and the distinctions created by wealth; some of them are possessed of property to the amount of many thousands of dollars, have houses handsomely and conveniently furnished, and their tables spread with our dainties and luxuries.⁸⁷

These Cherokees embraced new gendered expectations through their adoption of Anglo-American farming techniques, but others clearly continued to hunt. Ultimately, these Cherokee men, just like their contemporaries in the east, increasingly relied on masculine expressions demonstrated through their acquisition of material wealth.

⁸⁴ Thomas Nuttall, *Nuttall’s Journal*, 174.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Even though Nuttall's descriptions provide illuminating details left out of the accounts of United States officials, much of the evidence for the cultural knowledge that exists regarding the eastern Cherokeees does not exist for western Cherokeees until the 1820s when Reverend Cephas Washburn accepted the Cherokeees' invitation to establish a mission school among them. The motivations for the Cherokeees' invitation were varied. Establishing a mission school would certainly bode well for the "civilized" image they attempted to portray to American officials. Cherokeees wanted to appear more "civilized" than the Osage in order to maintain the support of the United States in their conflict. However, as the nineteenth century progressed white settlers grew more numerous, and it is most likely that the Cherokeees' show of "civilization" was employed in an effort to have the federal government recognize their land claims in the face of an ever-growing threat from American settlers. Just like their contemporaries in the east, western Cherokeees found it advantageous to express their masculinity in ways familiar and recognizable to Anglo-Americans in an attempt to maintain their land and sovereignty. Tahlonteskee and others believed that inviting a mission school was an effective way to promote this image to government officials.

The Dwight Mission School opened in January 1822, and Reverend Cephas Washburn's accounts and interviews of Cherokee men provide a useful cultural source for this chapter. The arrival of the missionaries also brought a great deal of material cultural change. The evolution of western Cherokee society and economy was already underway, following much of the same trajectory experienced by all inhabitants of the

Arkansas Territory, but the presence of the missionaries encouraged greater cultural transformations. According to Reverend Washburn's biographer, "The people among whom [the missionaries] went were at that time literally savages the men wearing neither hats nor pantaloons." Ten years after establishing his mission the good Reverend happily noted that "Now there are not twenty who do not wear pantaloons, and the great majority wear hats."⁸⁸ Washburn's conclusions about his success support Cherokee understandings of how Anglo-Americans interpreted Native lifeways. Even though Cherokee men embraced more outward displays of Anglo-American fashions, the warrior ideal remained important to Cherokee manhood.

In January 1822, the Osage approached Governor Miller and entreated him to secure a peace between themselves and the Cherokees.⁸⁹ In the spring, when Miller traveled to meet with the Cherokees to secure peace, he discovered "two large parties had gone to War against the Osages."⁹⁰ Despite this, Miller met with several Cherokee headmen who declined to make a decision until their warriors returned; "if they returned successful & none of them killed," the headmen agreed to meet with the Osages.⁹¹ Takatoka, the Cherokee "beloved man" that prepared for war despite Governor Miller's efforts to secure peace was also present two years later in the meeting with the governor.

⁸⁸ Date of the opening see page 110 in Reverend Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*. For quote see *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 23-24.

⁸⁹ The Osage Chiefs to Governor Miller, January 21, 1822, in *The Territorial Papers of*, Volume 19, 408-11.

⁹⁰ Governor Miller to the Secretary of War, Post of Arkansas, May 1822, in *The Territorial Papers*, Volume 19, 437.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 438.

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact date of Takatoka's arrival to the Arkansas Valley. Takatoka traveled west to war with the Osage in 1805 and 1806, but did not remain. According to future chief John Rogers, Takatoka "joined the western Cherokees" in 1813, and "immediately became their principal chief."⁹² He was a respected war leader, and led the majority of Cherokee war parties against the Osage during their years-long conflict. As the Cherokees settled into villages along the Arkansas River in the first decades of the nineteenth century, their war with the Osage featured prominently in their day-to-day lives. As a result, Cherokee headmen during this period of time were successful war leaders. The warrior ideal was a paramount aspect of Cherokee manhood among western Cherokees in the early nineteenth century. Many of the western Cherokee leaders, like Tahlenteskee and Glass, were able to continue expressions of masculinity crystalized during the Chickamauga wars with American settlers, that of the warrior diplomat. Other western Cherokee leaders relied on their war exploits as a platform for political leadership. Men like John McLemore, for instance, who served as a principal chief, arrived in the Arkansas Valley a well-respected warrior because of his participation in the Creek War.⁹³ The importance of the Osage war dictated that a warrior ethos remain a central part of Cherokee masculinity in the Arkansas Valley.

Cherokee manhood among the western Cherokees, however, was not only defined through the warrior-diplomat ideal. As Cherokees continued to embrace aspects of Anglo-American economic culture, men expressed their masculinity through material

⁹² Rogers Memorial, 4.

⁹³ "Journal of the Mission at Dwight," *Missionary Herald* Volume 21, No. 1 (January, 1825), 48.

trappings of wealth. After Tahlonteskee's death it was unclear who would become principal chief. The two most popular choices were Takatoka and John Jolly, Tahlonteskee's brother. Ultimately, Jolly was selected as principal chief, and this decision suggests a continued evolution in Arkansas Cherokee politics and identity.⁹⁴ John Jolly arrived in the Arkansas Valley in 1818. Prior to his arrival west of the Mississippi, Jolly owned a successful trading post in Tennessee. The botanist observer Thomas Nuttall stated that in manner and dress Jolly looked like an Anglo-American settler. For Nuttall, John Jolly's distinguishing feature was his language, as the headman did not speak English. Despite the language barrier Nuttall was impressed with Jolly and praised him as "a Franklin amongst his countrymen."⁹⁵ And much like Benjamin Franklin, Jolly was not a warrior. The fact that Jolly was selected as principal chief suggests changes in western Cherokee masculine ideals.

Even though Jolly became principal chief, Takatoka still held influence. During the meeting with Governor Miller about peace with the Osage, despite Jolly's role as principal chief, he and "all the people . . . deferred to Takatoka in regard to war."⁹⁶ According to Reverend Washburn, Takatoka was "lineally descended from their ancient priesthood; and before his immigration to Arkansas, often conducted the religious ceremonies of his people, and several times after his removal he officiated in that capacity."⁹⁷ Takatoka's influence suggests the continued ritual significance of warfare.

⁹⁴ The Arkansas Cherokees did not establish a constitutional government like the Cherokees in the east.

⁹⁵ Thomas Nuttall, *Nuttall's Journal*, 181-82.

⁹⁶ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 114.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 174.

Takatoka's ability to gain support for war had much to do with his status as a "beloved man." Takatoka's authority stemmed from this status and the ritual and spiritual significance and responsibilities that went along with such a designation.

Missionaries, like Cephas Washburn, appreciated Takatoka's influence among western Cherokees. Washburn sought to gain favor with the beloved man so that other Cherokees would take his Christian message seriously. During one interview, Washburn explained the benefits of Christianity and "civilization" to Takatoka. The beloved man's response illustrated that the hypocrisy of the federal government's policies were not lost on the Cherokees. Takatoka said that while he considered the missionary his friend, he did not agree that the President desired education and "civilization" for the Cherokees. "If he so wished" stated the beloved man, "why, when we emigrated from our old homes, did he not give us a hoe and spelling-book, instead of a blanket and rifle?"⁹⁸ According to Washburn, Takatoka remained opposed to "the arts of civilization and schools" until the arrival of George Guess (Sequoyah), at which time the beloved man learned to read and write in Cherokee.⁹⁹ The beloved man also warmed to the Christian message, stating, "It is a great and wonderful way; and I believe it is the right way. Our young people will walk in it and be saved."¹⁰⁰ Takatoka, however, believed himself too old to convert to Christianity. The beloved man approved of a change in lifeways for the next generation, but he refused to embrace a new cultural and gender ideal.

⁹⁸ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 176.

⁹⁹ Sequoyah moved to Arkansas in 1824. See Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 139.

¹⁰⁰ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 184.

Washburn also met with other influential Cherokee men, including Ta-ka-e-tuh, Takatoka's uncle. Ta-ka-e-tuh was also a priest, and very advanced in years when Washburn met him in the 1820s.¹⁰¹ Ta-ka-e-tuh was most likely Takatoka's maternal uncle, as priestly knowledge was passed down in families, and as maternal uncles were responsible for rearing young men.¹⁰² Washburn was very interested in learning more about Cherokee spiritualism and cosmology. In fulfilling his requests, the Cherokee priests demonstrated their desire to protect their sacred knowledge, as well as a sense of humor. Takatoka told Washburn that his uncle could better answer the missionary's questions, and when Washburn interviewed Ta-ka-e-tuh he related traditions that included references to the Old Testament. These included an ark-like "religious deposit" supposedly captured by Delawares, and an Eden-like description of the "first human pair."¹⁰³ The correlation that Ta-ka-e-tuh made between Cherokee sacred knowledge and Christianity was typical of Native prophets in the east since the late eighteenth century.

Another man, Blanket, brother of Ta-ka-e-tuh, provided an allusion to the Old Testament to explain Cherokee practice. Washburn asked why the Cherokees cut a particular sinew on the inside of venison thigh meat to discard. Blanket explained that once there was a Cherokee who was a "good man" that prayed often. One evening while praying for something he wanted, the "Being above" sent "a very strong man," and told

¹⁰¹ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 184. During the Chickamauga Wars Ta-ka-e-tuh "was regarded as too old to bear arms, or to go with the warriors in his priestly vocation."

¹⁰² Fathers were not considered related to their children by blood because Cherokees were a matrilineal society. If a woman and a man divorced the children stayed with their mother in her household; therefore, maternal uncles fulfilled the role of "father" for Cherokee children. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 42 and 45.

¹⁰³ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 192, 193.

the Cherokee “if he would overcome that man by wrestling, he would grant his petition.”¹⁰⁴ According to Blanket, these men wrestled a long time, and “the man from above put our ancestor’s thigh out of joint and caused the sinew to perish.”¹⁰⁵ Thus, the Cherokees did not eat that part of animals. When Washburn excitedly told Blanket that this story was very similar to the Biblical story of Jacob wrestling with an angel Blanket informed him “the white people must have borrowed that story from the Cherokees.”¹⁰⁶ Ta-ka-e-tuh and Blanket demonstrated their knowledge of Christianity, and used it in such a way to protect Cherokee sacred knowledge. Botanist Thomas Nuttall noted in his diary “From the civilized Cherokees, with whom alone I could conveniently hold converse, I found it extremely difficult to acquire any knowledge, either of traditions, opinions, or ancient customs of their nation.”¹⁰⁷ As both the examples of Blanket and Ta-ka-e-tuh demonstrate, Cherokees utilized their exposure to missionaries and Christianity ironically as a means to protect their spiritual practices and beliefs. Cherokees guarded their spiritualism closely, even with those that did not seek to convert them.

The Blanket also offered other insights into Cherokee culture that Washburn recorded. When Washburn met Blanket he resided in his sister’s home and later he moved in with his niece. Such a living arrangement indicates that Blanket and his family abided by matrilineal traditions. Blanket and his wife separated, or “divided blankets,”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 212.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 212-13.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 213.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Nuttall, *Nuttall’s Journal*, 184.

¹⁰⁸ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 207.

and he returned to the home of his nearest matrilineal relative.¹⁰⁹ Even though Blanket practiced matrilineal traditions, which provided women political influence in Cherokee society, his comments regarding women suggest some gendered tension among the Cherokees. Blanket complained that women talked too much. He explained to Washburn that women were always busy to prevent them from talking and gossiping too much. Blanket cited his wife's gossiping as the reason for his divorce.¹¹⁰ It is possible that Blanket's low opinion of women was just that, his own, and did not represent the larger male population. There is evidence that women maintained an influential role in western Cherokee society as evidenced by this easy and equitable divorce.

Tahlonteskee first requested a mission school in 1818. Washburn began his journey to Arkansas in November 1819, and arrived to the western Cherokee towns in 1820. When Cephas Washburn and his associates responded to Tahlonteskee's invitation for a mission school they met with a group of Cherokee headmen.¹¹¹ Once the arrangements for the school were agreed upon the missionaries were asked to remain in the council house so that "all the chiefs and warriors might give us their hands in token of the ratification of all the matters agreed to, and as a token of fraternal regard, and our adoption as Cherokees."¹¹² As a matrilineal society, the Cherokees traced their lineage through their mothers. As a result, women played an influential role as the gatekeepers of

¹⁰⁹ The Cherokees were a matrilineal society. When men and women married, the man moved in with his wife and her family. If the two divorced, the woman maintained control over her household and the man returned to his mother or nearest female relative. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 44.

¹¹⁰ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 204-7.

¹¹¹ For more on the missionary's journey, see Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 82-102.

¹¹² Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 104.

Cherokee society and citizenship. As the head of their households and clans, women were the only Cherokees who could adopt outsiders into their lineages.¹¹³ Adoption was a common occurrence in Cherokee society. Women made strangers family, and this served to boost numbers and smooth diplomatic relations. After shaking hands with the men, the missionaries were informed that the “women wished in the same way to express their welcome.”¹¹⁴ By making the missionaries fictive kin, the Cherokees in Arkansas made clear to the missionaries that while they were accepting them, they were doing so strictly on Cherokee terms. Thomas Nuttall also commented on the influence women held in their households particularly in matters of matrimony. If a young man wished to marry a woman he consulted her mother, “the father never interfering.”¹¹⁵ If the mother did not respond to the suitor “her brother or eldest son” were approached next.¹¹⁶ This process kept the decision of matrimony strictly within the bounds of the matrilineal household, thereby acknowledging and strengthening women’s influence and power in Cherokee society.

Even as Cherokee women in the west continued to fulfill their historic roles as the heads of matrilineages and societal gatekeepers, men’s gendered ideals continued to evolve. While many men continued to hunt, the majority of western Cherokee headmen were, much like their contemporaries in the east, an elite minority. Headman and Indian trader, Walter Webber, son of William Webber who settled along the St. Francis River

¹¹³ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 54.

¹¹⁴ Cephas Washburn, *Reminiscences of the Indians*, 104.

¹¹⁵ Thomas Nuttall, *Nuttalls Journal*, 188.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 189.

with Connettoo in the 1790s, held greater wealth than the white settlers around him.

According to Nuttall Webber lived “in ease and affluence, possessing a decently furnished and well provided house, several negro slaves, a large, well cleared, and well fenced farm; and both himself and his nephew read, write, and speak English.”¹¹⁷

According the missionaries, Webber was a “good example of christian manhood,” even though he never converted to Christianity.¹¹⁸ Webber fulfilled Anglo-American expectations of manhood, despite the fact that he remained a nonbeliever. Like many other elite Cherokee men in the nineteenth century, Webber embraced new and familiar expressions of masculinity to recreate ideals for Cherokee manhood. Webber’s model of manhood grew more attractive as the actual wars with the Osage ended but competition for federal recognition of land claims continued. The government still had not acknowledged Cherokee ownership of Lovely’s Purchase and as more and more white settlers crowded onto Cherokee land claims, presenting a “civilized” image to the American government officials was a means to combat colonialism.

These “civilized” expressions of manhood were not just articulated on an individual basis. In 1824, the Arkansas Cherokees made a collective decision to formulate a new government structure that would incorporate a more formal election of

¹¹⁷ Thomas Nuttall, *Nuttall’s Journal*, 181.

¹¹⁸ Jas. S. Buchanan interview with Ms. Edith Walker, undated. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>.

tribal representatives.¹¹⁹ A year later it was reported western Cherokee leaders agreed to divide their nation into four districts: Point Remove, Illinois, Piney, and Mulberry.

Each of these districts are to send two representatives to an annual council. The council is to be composed of a President, the several chiefs, and the above named representatives. The President and Committee are to be chosen annually by a joint suffrage of all the districts. In this council all national business is to be transacted.¹²⁰

This form of government, even though it established voting districts and a more formal way to decide the nation's business, was still a far cry from the constitutional government adopted by Cherokees in the east.

Even though western Cherokees continued to reevaluate and reconstruct their identities as men, their implementation of "civilization" and the material wealth they accumulated proved to be of little consequence to federal government officials who sought the fertile lands of the Arkansas River for white settlement. Cherokees signed a treaty with the United States in 1817 that exchanged two large tracts of land in Georgia

¹¹⁹ John Rogers Memorial, 7. Rogers states that Daniel Brown was appointed to formulate the government structure and law code in 1824. The council adopted Brown's suggestions "unanimously." According to Rogers: The new government had three branches—the legislative, executive, and judiciary. The legislature was divided into two houses: a national committee and national council and representatives were elected every year. The executive consisted of a principal chief and an assistant chief, each elected for four year terms. Judges were selected by the council, and the judicial branch consisted of a supreme, circuit, and district courts. "The laws then enacted were few, simple, and plain, well adapted to the condition of the western Cherokees. The government went immediately into operation." This account by Rogers, however, does not totally agree with Daniel Brown's account published in *The Missionary Herald*, vol. 21 (1825), 49. Rogers' memorial is issued at a time when Old Settlers (as the western Cherokee will be called) were politically opposed to John Ross and the eastern majority that arrived in Indian Territory in 1839 and were seeking redress from the federal government. It is possible that Rogers believed that American officials would be more sympathetic to his complaints if the Old Settlers appeared as "advanced" as the eastern Cherokee. Due to the discrepancy and the possible motives of Rogers, I have relied on Daniel Brown's account.

¹²⁰ *The Missionary Herald*, vol. 21 (1825), 49.

and Tennessee. According to the agreement, the federal government promised to provide equal acreage in Arkansas Territory.¹²¹ After Cherokees signed the treaty with the United States in 1817, which exchanged their eastern lands for those in Arkansas, President James Monroe promised: “As long as water flows, or grass grows upon the earth, or the sun rises to show your pathway, or you kindle your camp fires, so long shall you be protected by this Government, and never again removed from your present habitations.”¹²² Ten years later, even though water still flowed, grass grew, and the sun rose and set, the federal government began their efforts to remove the Arkansas Cherokees further west. In response, the Cherokees sent a delegation to Washington to secure their existing land bounds.¹²³

Their agent, Edward W. Duval, learned of the government’s plans to accomplish another treaty, and warned officials that an exchange for lands further west “would compel them [the Cherokees] to leave their opened fields & improvements, which they have been making and toiling on for years.”¹²⁴ The agent went on to point out that the government needed to provide compensation for the Cherokee improvements to prevent the Natives from suffering from “hunger, famine, & partial nakedness” while they rebuilt their homes and sowed new fields. According to Duval, “between five and six hundred families” lived in Arkansas and each family, at the very least, owned a “Cabin, Cornfield

¹²¹ William McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic*, 231.

¹²² McMinn to Meigs, January 18, 1818, Records of the Cherokee Agency in Tennessee, M-208.

¹²³ This delegation included: Black Fox, John Rogers, Tom Graves, Thomas Maw, George Marvis, John Looney, and George Guess (Sequoyah).

¹²⁴ Edward W. Duval to the Secretary of War, Washington, April 24, 1828, in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Volume 20, Arkansas Territory, 1825-1829, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1954), 654-55.

& vegetable Garden, and very many a Cotton-patch sufficiently large for supplying a product which, when manufactured, (and that is done by their own hands) furnishes a competence of necessary and substantial clothing.”¹²⁵ As Duval made clear, more substantial compensation would be required for Cherokee men and their families that embraced new cultural and gender ideals.

In 1828, the Arkansas Cherokee delegation was bribed and browbeaten by the federal government until they agreed to exchange their Arkansas lands for tracts further west.¹²⁶ The new treaty stated “the present location of the Cherokees in Arkansas being unfavorable to their present repose, and tending, as the past demonstrates, to their future degradation and misery” the government secured new lands for them further west “a home that shall never, in all future time, be embarrassed by having extended around it the lines, or placed over it the jurisdiction of a Territory or State.”¹²⁷ After signing the treaty the delegation was “afraid to return to their homes.”¹²⁸ The unauthorized sale of land was illegal and punishable by death. The Cherokee delegation asked the Secretary of War to write a letter that they could deliver upon their return to Arkansas that explained that the federal government “compelled” the delegates to sign the treaty and to not consider them

¹²⁵ *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Volume 20, 655.

¹²⁶ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 139. The Cherokees received varying sums of money. Thomas Graves received twelve hundred dollars, and George Guess and James Rogers received five hundred dollars. It is not known what, if any amounts, were accepted by Black Fox, Thomas Maw, George Marvis, or John Looney, but it is likely they received something. Thomas McKenney to E. W. Duval, May 28, 1828, in *The Territorial Papers*, Volume 20, 689.

¹²⁷ Treaty with the Cherokees, May 6, 1828, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904).

¹²⁸ Elizabeth Ross, “Busts of Notables,” September 13, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>.

“guilty of a treasonable act.”¹²⁹ The delegation was charged with securing title to Lovely’s Purchase and while they achieved that goal, it came at a high cost: their Arkansas lands. These Cherokees failed in their masculine responsibility to maintain the good man ideal and represent and protect their people.

In return for their solemn promise and compensation, the government required the Arkansas Cherokees to encourage the migration of the Cherokees located in the east. Some, beleaguered by the aggressive colonialism of the state of Georgia opted to relocate to what became Indian Territory with the Arkansas Cherokees, but the majority of the eastern Cherokees scoffed at the suggestion of relocation.¹³⁰ In fact, the mission of the Arkansas Cherokees to the east elicited violence from some. Principal chief Path Killer hit one western emissary on the head with a heavy rock and threatened to kill him.¹³¹ Not only had the western Cherokees disappointed those in Arkansas, their cession also called their manhood into question among eastern Cherokees as well. The violent response of Path Killer foreshadowed problems to come.

One eastern Cherokee man penned his thoughts on emigration in an editorial published in the *Cherokee Phoenix*. The author pointed out the hypocrisy of the federal government’s argument that emigration “would facilitate our civilization, and we would sooner become an enlightened people.” Instead, the Cherokee recalled the previous associations the federal government made with relocation and the hunt and the hypocrisy

¹²⁹ Elizabeth Ross, “Busts of Notables.”

¹³⁰ The aggressive colonialism of the Georgia government and its citizens will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

¹³¹ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 139.

of their new efforts: “while we are prospering under the exhilarating rewards of agriculture, the rifle is again put into our hands, and the brass kettle swung to our backs, and we are led into the deep forest where game is plenty, by the hands of those who would once have had us abandon the chase.”¹³² This author fully embraced the new ideal of Cherokee manhood, predicated more on Anglo-American lifeways, and he assumed that the Arkansas Cherokees did not. He was correct to point out the hypocrisy of the federal government’s Indian relations and “civilization” program, but he was incorrect in his assumption that the Arkansas Cherokees continued to express their manhood through the hunt. Once settled the Arkansas Cherokees and those that joined them from east of the Mississippi after the Treaty of 1828 became known as the Old Settlers. These Cherokees built cabins and planted cornfields, orchards, and grew cotton—symbols of achievement in Cherokee *and* early American society.

In 1833, the missionaries at Dwight recorded a “State of the people.” According to this report there were approximately four thousand Old Settlers living in Indian Territory. The Old Settlers no longer “pursue[d] the hunter life for subsistence,” and instead they engaged in agricultural pursuits. Even though western Cherokee men eschewed the historic masculine employment of hunting, they did continue to go to war. The missionaries stated that when successful war parties returned “some . . . attend a Scalp-dance.” The missionaries down-played the spiritual significance of the ritual, but the continuation of the historic rite of passage for Cherokee men and the community’s

¹³² Young Beaver, “Indian Emigration,” in *Cherokee Phoenix*, Wednesday, September 17, 1828, Volume I, no. 29.

willingness to validate this expression illustrates the continuation of some gender ideals in western Cherokee society and their difference from the eastern Cherokees. These differences proved critical when the eastern Cherokees were removed to Indian Territory.¹³³

In the early nineteenth century, western Cherokees established lifeways that allowed a continuation of eighteenth-century expressions of masculinity. Cherokee men first began migrating west at the end of the eighteenth century and as the nineteenth century progressed, more men made the decision to voluntarily move west. Varied motivations pushed Cherokee men across the Mississippi: some fled to elude Cherokee assassins and others wanted to remove themselves from Anglo-American influences. While these factors pushed Cherokees from their eastern homes, the hope of a life in which eighteenth-century gender ideals continued as a core element of society enticed, or pulled the Cherokees west. Highlighting voluntary migrations in Cherokee society illuminates the fluid and contested nature of Cherokee manhood in the nineteenth century. Regardless of motivation, the Cherokee men who relocated to the Arkansas Valley in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries employed the good man ideal as they expressed political dissent to the changes in the east by going their own way. The good man ideal allowed Cherokee men to assert their own interests while maintaining harmony within their communities. As aspects of this chapter foreshadow, however, the

¹³³Cephas Washburn to David Greene and others, June 4, 1833. Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions: Unit 6 (ABC 18.3.1) Reel 743.

forced Removal of 1838-1839 proved too great a colonial pressure to be controlled by the good man ideal—disharmony resulted.

CHAPTER V

“CHEROKEES ARE MEN”: CHEROKEE MASCULINITY AND REMOVAL, 1830-1846

Almost one hundred years after Elizabeth Watts’s grandparents were forcibly removed from their homes in Georgia, Watts recounted their story of Removal and settlement in Indian Territory to a WPA field worker:

The white people used all means to get the Indians out of Georgia . . . Ross did all he could to get to stay there, but the Georgia white men . . . made life a torment to them. The Cherokees began to think of joining the West Cherokees . . . Like everything it took a leader [Watts mentions the leaders that made up the treaty party including the Ridges and the Waties] Of course, John Ross was the Chief and they all got to squabbling. . . . [After Removal] years passed and the bad feelings between the two factions seemed to get worse . . . The Indians did not want to fight—They had enough trouble, but they had to take one side or another and that caused much trouble at times.¹

Elizabeth Watts’s account demonstrates the fractures created in Cherokee society over Removal. In fact, Removal caused an outbreak in violence that lasted for decades after settlement in Indian Territory. As Watts’s account demonstrates, however, the violence that broke out after the Cherokees arrived in Indian Territory originated from preexisting differences surrounding Cherokee governance and manhood spurred by the Removal crisis. The good man ideal that so ably aided Cherokee men in avoiding confrontation

¹ L.D. Wilson interview of Mrs. Elizabeth Watts, April 27, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>. Accessed June 15, 2015.

among themselves broke down in the face of forced Removal, and as Watts alludes to, the opportunity to go one's own way or assert one's interests cautiously no longer existed. Instead, Cherokees, and particularly Cherokee men, "had to take one side or another."²

As the pressures of colonialism mounted in the nineteenth century, the good man ideal no longer offered realistic options for maintaining harmony between men. As this ideal broke down violence emerged. The debates over Removal proved too much and rather than attempt peace, men often lashed out violently at one another, both before and after Removal. Some violence may be credited to a revival of blood law, the eighteenth-century method of preserving harmony between clans. However, other evidence suggests that this was not the case. The examples of Tom Starr and Stand Watie, two men who committed acts of retaliatory violence, show that the deaths they avenged were not necessarily clan members or relatives. These acts of violence represented two competing expressions of Cherokee gender ideals and identity that dominated Cherokee thoughts and actions at this time.

Disputes over Removal were venues where Cherokee men continued to reinterpret their manhood in the wake of colonialism. Eighteenth-century masculine ideals, such as the warrior or hunter, do not necessarily apply to Cherokee men during the Removal era. Treaty Party members like Major Ridge, as well as leaders like John Ross, participated in plantation slavery, operated other burgeoning businesses, like river ferries, and owned

² Wilson interview of Watts, April 27, 1937, *Indian Pioneer Papers*.

large amounts of livestock. The wealth they accumulated set them apart from many of their countrymen—they were an elite minority. Even so, most Cherokee men, regardless of economic status, adopted Euro-American farming techniques and practiced animal husbandry by the 1820s. Thus, it does not seem that Cherokee men supported either the vision of Major Ridge or John Ross based upon the types of lifestyles they led. While eighteenth-century expressions of masculinity such as warfare and hunting faded from Cherokee life, diplomacy remained an avenue for men to prove themselves in the nineteenth century.³ Additionally, men continued in their roles as fathers and husbands, and as discussed previously, even though the nature of Cherokee politics and culture changed, with the acquisition of assets and the centralization of political power, Cherokee men were expected to always place the community above their individual interests. The failure to do so, like in the case of Double Head, could lead to death. During the early nineteenth century, the battle to protect the Cherokee people and their towns moved into a decidedly political sphere, and Cherokee men fought to maintain land and Cherokee sovereignty. In this way, Cherokee men continued in their eighteenth-century gendered

³ The difference between men's roles as diplomats did change from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century in regard to age. In the eighteenth century, diplomacy was the more the purview of older men—men that already established themselves as warriors when they were younger. In the nineteenth century, as opportunities to distinguish oneself as a warrior dwindled, Cherokee men moved into the political sphere at an earlier age and sought to prove themselves as able representatives and diplomats. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 131-34. For more on the Double Head assassination see Chapter II.

roles as diplomats who served and protected community interests; however, the community was no longer one town or region, but an entire Nation.⁴

Throughout the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the Cherokees successfully repelled government efforts to relocate them to areas west of the Mississippi River. While a few thousand Cherokees decided to leave, as discussed in the preceding chapter, the majority of the Nation preferred to remain in their homes in parts of present-day Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. The Cherokees' position grew increasingly untenable in the wake of Georgia's efforts to rid itself, once and for all, of the Indian populations within its boundaries.⁵ The discovery of gold in north Georgia in 1829 led to increased settler invasions onto Cherokee lands, and the inconvenient location of many of the gold deposits, which lay within the Cherokee Nation, only added to the arguments of Georgia statesmen asserting the state's sovereignty over that of the Indians.⁶

In addition to the discovery of gold, the promotion and expansion of a plantation economy in the Southeast resulted in greater desires of white settlers (with the support of

⁴ As discussed earlier the Cherokees altered their political organization beginning in 1808, moving away from town or region governance to a centralized nation. Centralization continued with the creation of voting districts in 1820, and concluded with the adoption of a constitution modeled off of that of the United States in 1827. See Andrew Denson, *Demanding the Cherokee Nation: Indian Autonomy and American Culture, 1830-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 20. For more detail refer to Chapter II.

⁵ Other southern states, such as Alabama and Tennessee, also developed policies to dispossess the Cherokee; however, their actions were not as aggressive as Georgia's because they did not gain immediate title to land sold by the Indians. Instead, control went to the federal government because they were public land states. Georgia, as an original colony, gained immediate control over lands ceded or sold by the Cherokees. See Theda Perdue and Mike Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears* (New York: Viking, 2007), 93.

⁶ McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 430-31.

their state and federal governments) to remove the Indians to areas west of the Mississippi River. The early nineteenth century brought the Industrial Revolution to Great Britain, and with it, a demand for cotton to fuel its burgeoning textile mills. The demand for cotton also grew in the northeast in the 1830s as the Industrial Revolution crossed the Atlantic. These two markets were just a segment of the larger, worldwide demand for cotton and cotton products. In the American Southeast cotton cultivation proved a lucrative business.⁷ The riches possible with the expansion of the cotton economy in the Southeast were not limited to cultivation alone—money could also be made in land speculation. The opportunity for profitable cotton cultivation and land speculation whetted an already voracious appetite among American settlers for land, more specifically, Indian land.⁸

During the nineteenth century, the Cherokees grew increasingly focused on maintaining sovereign possession of their lands and fighting further cessions. Cherokee men relied on their diplomatic acumen to achieve these goals. The United States government first placed pressure on the Cherokees to move west of the Mississippi during the presidency of Thomas Jefferson, and the government's appeals grew more frequent and fervent as the nineteenth century progressed. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Cherokee agent Colonel Return J. Meigs entreated one of the

⁷ According to some figures, a “500-acre cotton plantation [which produced a variety of medium quality . . . could expect to make a profit on the order of \$6,000 a year—a very large sum in those days.” Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Long Bitter Trail: Andrew Jackson and the Indians* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 7.

⁸ McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence*, 430-431; Theda Perdue and Mike Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears* (New York: Viking, 2007), 48-49; Wallace, *The Long Bitter Trail*, 6-8.

headmen, Bloody Fellow, to migrate west. Bloody Fellow informed Meigs that he had no desire to “leave the country of his birth.” Meigs suggested that if the Cherokees moved they would no longer feel pressure to adopt white cultural mores, and instead they “might pursue the chase unmolested & perpetuate the race of Indians.” Bloody Fellow was still not enticed and responded that even if all the “habits” of the Cherokees were replaced by the “habits” of the whites, “or even should they themselves become white by intermarriage,” he was still more concerned with “preserving them together as a people” on their ancient lands.⁹ As Bloody Fellow’s words indicate, Cherokee sovereignty proved the most important issue for Cherokee men to protect.

Bloody Fellow’s statement on intermarriage and race also demonstrates the importance of matrilineage in Cherokee society. Cherokee children traced their ancestry through their mothers, and despite their physical appearance and their lifeways, Cherokee identity remained securely fixed through matrilineages. Additionally, Bloody Fellow’s words indicate that during the nineteenth century, the refusal to cede any additional land was the surest way to ensure the continuation of matrilineages, sovereignty, and by extension, Cherokee identity. As Cherokee sovereignty and identity grew more connected to attachments to specific lands in the east, the commitment to maintaining those lands was a concern of both women and men.

Because Cherokee peoples traced their genealogy through their mothers, women headed households and clans, and maternal uncles, sisters, and grandmothers played the

⁹ John Howard Payne, *The Payne-Butrick Papers*, Vol. II, ed. William L. Anderson, Jane L. Brown, and Anne F. Rogers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 101.

principal role in a child's rearing. As a result of this societal organization women played a prominent and visible role in Cherokee communities. Women's control over foodstuffs, because of their role as farmers, combined with their positions as clan leaders and heads of household meant that women were active participants in politics. The United States government's policy of "civilizing" encouraged women to move into the home and men to take to the fields thus lessening women's visible role as producers, and by extension, women's involvement in politics. The degree to which this actually occurred, however, as discussed previously, is questionable. Even though women could not vote in the centralized Cherokee Nation, women continued to use their influence among their kin to make their opinions known, and at times, addressed men directly.¹⁰

In the spring of 1817 Cherokee women petitioned their leaders to refuse any future land cessions. The women addressed the council and stated: "now being present at the meeting of the chiefs and warriors in council have thought it their duty as mothers to address their beloved chiefs and warriors now assembled."¹¹ Their words prove the accepted, participatory role that Cherokee women held in politics. Additionally, it is clear that these women partook in the council by invoking their roles as mothers, or the heads of their households and clans. In their protest against further land cessions, the women cited the Cherokees sacred right to their lands. In the petition the women stated, "it was

¹⁰ Theda Perdue deals at length with the changing roles of women in Cherokee society during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. See Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

¹¹ Cherokee Indian Women. *Cherokee Indian/Native American Women to National Council at Amohee*, May 2, 1817. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/maj007262/>. Accessed January 4, 2017.

the good will of our creator to place us here.”¹² In effect, the Cherokees inherited their lands from their creator, and they needed to maintain that inheritance so that it could be passed down to successive generations. The women refer to the headmen and warriors as “children” throughout the petition, and as the leaders of Cherokee clans and society, they spoke for their children now living and those yet to come.¹³

Through their petition, these women illustrate the presence of cultural continuity, evidenced in their active participation in politics. The petition itself, however, provides evidence of significant cultural change. The Cherokee women implored the headmen and warriors to retain what lands they had left and “continue on it & enlarge your farms. Cultivate and raise corn & cotton and your mothers and sisters will make clothing for you.”¹⁴ The women supported the men’s new, “civilized” occupation as farmers. Cherokee women acknowledged their changing gender roles by describing their new occupations as those confined to the house: spinning and weaving. Almost a year after delivering their 1817 petition, Cherokee women again pled with their “children” to refuse any attempts of the United States government to effect a land exchange. In this petition, the women reiterated the Cherokees’ changing gender roles, brought by “civilization,” and expressed fear that moving west of the Mississippi river would bring them “to a

¹² Cherokee Indian Women. *Cherokee Indian/Native American Women to National Council at Amoshee*, May 2, 1817. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/maj007262/>. Accessed January 4, 2017.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

savage state again.”¹⁵ Despite this obvious alteration in gender roles, Cherokee women remained secure in their right to openly disagree with men. In the 1818 petition the women state:

There are some white men among us who have been raised in this country from their youth, are connected with us by marriage, & have considerable families, who are very active in encouraging the emigration of our nation . . . They seem to be only concerned how to increase their riches, but do not care what becomes of our Nation, nor even of their own wives and children.¹⁶

It is impossible to know if the wives of these men actually participated in the creation of this petition; regardless, the boldness of these women to publicly express their opinions, and actually reproach a particular group of men attested to the continued power that women held and exercised in Cherokee society. This example also illustrates the expectation that Cherokee men must protect Cherokee identity by preserving Cherokee land and sovereignty.¹⁷

As the words of the Cherokee women attest, in the era prior to Removal, Cherokees expected men to demonstrate their manhood through articulating their connection to eastern lands and repelling all attempts to relocate west, and if they failed it was women’s responsibility, as their mothers, to openly challenge them. In this way, the concept of balance is clearly illustrated. Men’s authority as political leaders was checked

¹⁵ Cherokee Women’s Petition, June 30, 1818 in Theda Perdue and Mike Green, *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2005), 126.

¹⁶ Cherokee Women’s Petition, June 30, 1818 in Theda Perdue and Mike Green, *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents*, 126-27.

¹⁷ Tiya Miles, “Circular Reasoning”: Recentring Cherokee Women in the Antiremoval Campaigns,” *American Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (June 2009): 221-43.

by women's influence as the heads of families and clans. To demonstrate their masculinity Cherokee men continued to promote their attachment to the land as the means to repel colonial pressures, safeguard sovereignty, and fulfill their gendered expectations.

In 1829, the Cherokee General Council voted to reinstate the death penalty as punishment for selling Cherokee lands without the full consent of the nation's representatives. In support of this motion, Womankiller, an elderly Cherokee man, expressed his desire for the Cherokees to "increase on the land of our fathers," and to that end he believed that bill to enforce the death penalty in cases of land sales was "a good law" as it would "not kill the innocent but the guilty." Womankiller went on to say that former headmen and members of council "spoke the same language," meaning that they valued the land and found death to be an appropriate punishment for those who would not fight to defend Cherokee possession of their territory. Womankiller's verbal support for the motion grew more personal and poignant: "My sun of existence is fast approaching to its sitting, and my aged bones will soon be laid under ground, and I wish them laid in the bosom of this earth we have received from our fathers who had it from the Great Being above . . . I hope my bones will not be deserted by you."¹⁸ Womankiller encouraged the men gathered at the council to follow their responsibility to protect the lands of their ancestors. He believed that every means necessary, including one's life should be offered in defense of the land, and by extension the people. Womankiller affirmed that it was

¹⁸ "Council," *Cherokee Phoenix*, Wednesday, October 28, 1829. The debate over the law is recorded on Saturday, October 24, 1829.

better to die in defense of their territory and “sleep with the thousands of our departed people” than betray their responsibility as protectors—their responsibility as men.¹⁹

The importance of the land to Cherokee identity is evidenced in the words of Womankiller and the two petitions from Cherokee women. Individual colonies, and later states, harassed the Cherokees for land cessions for generations. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, American efforts to effect a land exchange that promoted a wholesale dispossession encouraged Cherokee society to express their land rights in terms of a sacred possession, something that they, as humans, did not have the power to give away, or have taken away by American colonizers. Before America achieved independence from Great Britain, a naturalist, William Bartram, traveled throughout the Southeastern portion of North America, interacted with Indians, and recorded the information he learned about the people and plants he encountered. Bartram reported the Cherokees “came from the West, or Sun setting,” rather than living in the eastern lands where Bartram interacted with them in the eighteenth century. Bartram made his deductions based on conversations that he had with individual Cherokees. As further evidence Bartram records that when he asked the Cherokees about “those great pyramidal or Conical Mounds of Earth,” the Natives informed him “that they were not the people who constructed them . . . nor were the people whom they expelled when they invaded the country & took possession.”²⁰ If Cherokee traditions included migration in the

¹⁹ “Council,” *Cherokee Phoenix*, Wednesday, October 28, 1829.

²⁰ Gregory Waselkov and Kathryn E. Holland Braund eds. *William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 141.

eighteenth century, these traditions evolved over the course of the nineteenth century, most likely in response to the continued burdens of colonialism and land loss.

The pressures of colonialism caused Cherokees to alter the way they described their rights to the land. Efforts to stave off further cessions moved rights and connections to the land, specifically ancestral holdings in the east, to the center of Cherokee identity. Additionally, their description of the land as a gift from their creator reinforced Cherokee claims of sovereignty among their own society and that of white Americans. Those principally responsible for articulating this belief to whites were Cherokee men, and as Americans moved away from policies of “civilization” and toward policies of Removal, debates regarding emigration became laboratories for testing Cherokee masculine ideals and abilities. The debate over Removal required Cherokee men to once again reassess and, in some cases, renegotiate their obligations as men and to watch out for men who failed to live up to their role as protectors of Cherokee land.

A man engaged in cotton cultivation as well as speculation won his second bid for President of the United States in 1828. In Andrew Jackson’s inaugural address he laid out his ideas for a “Removal Act” that would force all Southeastern Indians to lands west of the Mississippi River.²¹ Jackson had actively taken part in negotiating Cherokee land cessions of an area referred to as Muscle Shoals in northern Alabama in 1816.²² The Shoals along the Tennessee River were highly coveted by white settlers for their fertile

²¹ Anthony Wallace, *The Long Bitter Trail*, 5.

²² “Treaty with the Cherokee, 1816,” September 14, 1816, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Volume II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904).

soil; Cherokee men fought white settlement in this area beginning in the 1780s.²³ After Jackson's election, the Cherokees' ability to exercise their sovereignty grew increasingly tenuous, and in the winter of 1830 a Tennessee congressman presented Jackson's Removal bill to Congress. By the spring the bill passed both houses of Congress, despite the emotional debate over the issue.²⁴

Cherokee sovereignty lay at the heart of the debates surrounding Removal—federal and state initiated. The plans of Georgia to acquire all the Indian land in their state boundaries can be traced to 1802 when Georgia politicians ceded their western land claims to the federal government.²⁵ Not only did Georgia receive 1.25 million dollars, the federal government also promised to abolish all Indian land claims within the new recognized bounds of the state. Two decades later a Georgia commission found that the federal government derelict in this promise, and in response the state petitioned Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams to have the Indians removed from the state. Both requested legislation from Congress that would allow the federal government to negotiate and exchange of all eastern Native lands for tracts in the West. Congress did nothing to answer these requests, and as a result Georgia's efforts increased.²⁶

²³ Stanley, Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 74.

²⁴ The debate over Indian Removal underlined its intrinsic connection to plantation slavery and demonstrated the growing divide of sectional interests. In general, Northeastern congressional representatives and those that were considered Christian reformers stood in opposition to Removal. Representatives from southern and western states favored the bill. See McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renaissance*, 434-7; Perdue and Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 61-63; and Wallace, *Long Bitter Trail*, 66-70.

²⁵ This region became Alabama and Mississippi.

²⁶ Theda Perdue and Mike Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 55-57.

In 1830, the Georgia legislature declared all actions and laws of the Cherokee Nation illegal and unenforceable and extended its criminal and civil jurisdiction into the Cherokee Nation. This legislation placed Cherokees under Georgia law but also refused them the right to testify against a white person in a court of law.²⁷ The Georgia legislature, frustrated with the role that missionaries played in the Cherokee resistance to Removal, also enacted a law that required any white person living within the Cherokee Nation after March 1, 1831, to take an oath of obedience to Georgia or leave.²⁸

In order to test the federal government's willingness to recognize Cherokee rights, the Cherokees presented several cases, in which they hoped the United States Supreme Court would uphold their rights in the face of federal and state government efforts to ignore their independent status and take over their lands. One of the most famous of these cases is *Worcester v. Georgia*. Two missionaries, Reverend Samuel Worcester and Doctor Elizur Butler, refused to take the oath of loyalty after their arrest, and thereby presented the Cherokees with a case that the Supreme Court would hear.²⁹ The Court issued a 6-1 ruling in March 1832 against Georgia and Chief Justice John Marshall's opinion upheld the idea of Cherokee sovereignty.³⁰

²⁷ Theda Perdue and Mike Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 58-59.

²⁸ Certain white persons were exempt, including United States government officials and white men married to Cherokee women. These exclusions made it clear that the law targeted the missionaries living among the Cherokee Indians. McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renaissance*, 441-42; Perdue and Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 84; Wallace Long *Bitter Trail*, 75-76.

²⁹ In a previous Supreme Court case, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, the court ruled that the Cherokees did not have standing because they were not a foreign state. The missionaries, as United States citizens, did have standing.

³⁰ Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change: Constitutional Governments Among the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Creek* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 144;

Despite the victory achieved in Marshall's opinion and the Court's ruling, the Cherokees quickly learned that neither President Andrew Jackson, nor the state of Georgia had any intention of recognizing the Court's decision. Georgia divided the Cherokee Nation into land districts and then held a land lottery in 1832. Even with the passage of The Removal Act of 1830, the federal government could not force the Cherokees into a treaty in which they forfeited claim to their lands. Through their measures to go ahead and confiscate Cherokee lands and deed them to white winners of the land lottery, Georgia effectively dispossessed the Cherokees even before Removal was enacted. Worcester and Butler, weary of jail, sought pardons from Georgia's governor, and agreed to vacate the state. Losing the support of the missionaries and their organizations to fight Removal proved to be the last straw for many Cherokee leaders.³¹

As supporters of Removal, Major Ridge and other Treaty Party members seemingly failed in their masculine duties to protect Cherokee land. Some Cherokees certainly thought so, and their reactions to the treaty were, at times, fierce. Even so, accusations of cowardly behavior and a lack of manliness were made by both the Ross and Ridge factions. Members of the Treaty Party defended their actions and declared that if the majority of the Cherokees understood their situation they would be willing to relocate. Elias Boudinot, Major Ridge's nephew and a member of the Treaty Party,

McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence*, 444; Perdue and Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 86-88; Wallace Long *Bitter Trail*, 75-76.

³¹ Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change*, 144; McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renascence*, 448-50; Perdue and Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 96-98; Wallace Long *Bitter Trail*, 89-90.

accused John Ross of failing to meet the crisis of Removal “manfully.”³² According to Boudinot, Ross’s promise to the Cherokees that the United States’ government would ultimately uphold Cherokee sovereignty was “ignorant,” “near sighted,” and demonstrated “stupid obstinacy.”³³ Boudinot defended the actions of the Treaty Party by asserting that the majority of the Cherokees were “ignorant of their true situation”; therefore, the Treaty Party minority were justified in doing what “the majority *would do* if they understood their condition.”³⁴ Thus, the Treaty Party’s position was that the majority of the Cherokees would support them and Removal, if they only understood the political situation.

Boudinot’s accusation that Ross failed to act manfully was not just an affront to Ross but to all those opposed to Removal. In 1808, then principal chief, Black Fox, promoted the idea of an exchange of Cherokee lands for tracts west of the Mississippi River. Major Ridge stood in protest and proclaimed that while Black Fox was “a man . . . [and had] a right to give his opinion,” Ridge “as a man, as a chief, as a Cherokee having the right to be consulted in a matter of such importance” refused Black Fox’s idea of removal. Ridge went on: “What are your heads placed on your bodies for, but to think, and, if to think, why should you not be consulted . . . do I speak [as] a free man, to men

³² Elias Boudinot, “Documents in Relation to the Validity of the Cherokee Treaty of 1835,” 26. The University of Georgia Libraries, Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/ftaccess.cgi?galileo_server=oberon.galib.uga.edu&galileo_server_galileo_server_port=80&galileo_server_id=9&instcode=publ&instname=Guest&helpuserid=&style=&_id=bedb37f6-c8bf154b61-8818&dbs=ZLNA. Accessed December 17, 2014.

³³ Boudinot, “Documents in Relation to the Validity of the Cherokee Treaty of 1835,” 26.

³⁴ Ibid., 2.

who are free and know their rights?”³⁵ According to Ridge, Cherokee men were not only rational, astute individuals; the fact that they were men necessitated their activity in politics and diplomacy. They had a responsibility to make their opinions known, and once they did, Cherokee men expected others to acknowledge and respect their views.³⁶

Boudinot was following in this Cherokee political tradition of open debate; however, he blamed Ross for robbing his supporters of “their rights” as men to know the true nature of the situation. Boudinot’s accusations were not baseless. He was removed from his position as editor of the *Cherokee Phoenix* when his opinions regarding a treaty became known.³⁷ In this way, Boudinot and like-minded men were deprived of their rights as Cherokee men to speak freely and engage in thoughtful debate. Ross’ actions also demonstrate an alteration, and even a repudiation of the good man ideal. Rather than allow others to express their interests, he stifled debate and the exchange of ideas. The disagreements surrounding Removal proved too great for the consensus building and harmony protecting proscriptions in the good man ideal. Increasingly, a new masculine ideal emerged, one that shattered the harmony among men and promoted violence as a principal method of influence and communication.

³⁵ John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers*, vol. VI, ed. William L. Anderson, Jane L. Brown, and Anne F. Rogers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 419-20.

³⁶ Black Fox was deposed due to his support of emigration but was later reinstated. See McLoughlin, *Cherokee Renaissance*, 145-47.

³⁷ Boudinot was not the only treaty supporter impacted; tribal leaders were also removed from their positions in the government as a result of their political opinions. See Andrew Denson, *Demanding the Cherokee Nation*, 39; Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism in the Cherokee Nation,” in *The Cherokee Indian Nation: A Troubled History*, ed. Duane H. King (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 149.

These changes progressed at a slow pace from the time of political centralization to the 1830s. Major Ridge, a prominent headman and signer of the Treaty of New Echota, actually remained outspoken *against* Removal until 1833. However, after his lands were deeded to a Richmond County widow in the Georgia land lottery, after it became clear that both Jackson and the state of Georgia were going to ignore the Supreme Court's opinion, and after the Cherokees lost the support of their missionaries, Major Ridge began to alter his views on the best way to ensure continued Cherokee sovereignty. By the spring of 1833, Major Ridge's name was listed with other "leading & influential men . . . warmly advocating a Treaty."³⁸ Major Ridge and others planned to gather "all the head men friendly to Removal . . . and assemble them in a council."³⁹ They hoped to gain greater support for their scheme of Removal and ultimately persuade those of the "Ignherent class" that their best interests lay in migrating.⁴⁰

Major Ridge and others did not wish to move, but they believed that their situation had become untenable. They grew increasingly exasperated with their principal chief, John Ross, for continuing in his belief that the Cherokees could, through petitions and court cases, remain on their lands. John Ridge, Major Ridge's son, vented his frustrations to Ross and tried to change his mind:

Sir, I have the right to address you as the chief of the whole Cherokee Nation, upon whom rests, under Heaven the highest responsibility the well being of the

³⁸ William Hardin to Wilson Lumpkin, Cass County, Georgia, April 7, 1833 in *Cherokee Indian Letters, Talks and Treaties, 1786-1838*, ed. Mrs. J. E. Hays, State Historian (Atlanta, 1939), 404.

³⁹ William Hardin to Wilson Lumpkin, Near New Echota, April 13, 1833, in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 409. Hardin's source for this information was the headman, William Hicks.

⁴⁰ William Hardin to Wilson Lumpkin, April 13, 1833 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 409.

whole people; and I do trust that you will return as I know you are capable of acting the part of a statesman in this trying crisis of our affairs. After, we all know, upon consultation in Council, that we can't be a Nation here, I hope we shall attempt to establish it somewhere else!⁴¹

John Ridge called on Ross to fulfill his political responsibilities as the principal man in the Cherokee Nation and protect the people. As John Ridge's words make clear, his opinion regarding men's obligation to ensure Cherokee sovereignty remained unchanged. Ridge suggested that fulfilling one's manly responsibility no longer meant maintaining a dogged commitment to an eastern Nation. Instead, he advocated men act in the best interests of the Cherokee people and promote nationhood elsewhere. According to Ridge, masculinity no longer depended on protecting eastern lands—it meant protecting “the whole people.”⁴²

Both men wished to fulfill their roles as the protectors of the Cherokee people, but whereas John Ross seemed committed to the idea of securing the land for the people as the means to ensure their happiness and security, John Ridge and others began to view their responsibility to the Cherokee Nation differently. Rather than persist in what they believed to be a dead-end argument about the connections to the land, they argued that the people's happiness and security would be best served by moving out of Georgia and other states that continued to abuse Cherokee people. Ridge informs Ross that their

⁴¹ John Ridge to John Ross, Running Waters [Cherokee Nation], February 2, 1833 in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, ed. Gary E. Moulton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 260. <http://solomon.eena.alexanderstreet.com.libproxy.uncg.edu/cgi-bin/asp/philo/getobject.pl?c.317:2:201.eena>. Accessed August 25, 2015.

⁴² John Ridge to John Ross, Running Waters [Cherokee Nation], February 2, 1833 in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, 260.

people “are robbed & whipped by the whites almost every day.”⁴³ In Ridge’s mind, the injustices inflicted upon the Cherokee people required Ross to reconsider his commitment to the land as the only way to protect the people.

Cherokee men increasingly found themselves powerless to protect their property and families in the face of Georgia’s punitive policies. Ridge and others believed the only way to prevent complete emasculation was to accept the dire nature of their situation, and fulfill their gendered roles as diplomats and protectors by achieving the best deal they could for the Cherokee Nation. While both men desired to protect the interests of the people, Ridge and others altered their commitment to eastern land as the means to do so. The Treaty Party saw no manliness in maintaining land when they could do nothing to protect the physical wellbeing of the people. Instead, the constant attacks and violations by Georgians undercut the historic masculine role as protector, and in effect feminized Cherokee men.

While the Ridges and other Treaty Party members believed that their role as men depended on acting diplomatically in the best interest of the Cherokee people through a Removal treaty, other Cherokee men, encouraged by their chief John Ross, continued to express their manhood through their commitment to remaining on their ancestral lands and punishing those who did not support such a policy. The increasing polarized opinions among Cherokee men undermined the good man ideal and its tenets to maintain harmony

⁴³ John Ridge to John Ross, Running Waters [Cherokee Nation], February 2, 1833 in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, 259.

among men. Thus, the rumors of treaty meetings that travelled throughout the Cherokee Nation, proved perilous for those believed to be advocates for Removal.

In 1834, John Walker Jr., a proponent of Removal, was shot from his horse while returning from a council meeting.⁴⁴ Eli Hicks, described as “the white mans friend” and “friendly . . . [disposed] towards the removal of the Cherokee tribe to the west” was also shot.⁴⁵ The impetus for shooting Hicks does not appear to be purely politically motivated, but The Swimmer, one of the men responsible for Hicks’ death, found justification for his action in Hicks’s stance on Removal. According to The Swimmer, “far from being looked on as a murderer, he ought to be honoured as a patriot” due to the fact that Hicks had a history of betraying his country and “was trying even then to sell to the white-men.”⁴⁶ As the examples of John Walker Jr. and Eli Hicks demonstrate, the debate over Removal was both a reason and a justification for murder. In the wake of violence, opinions regarding Cherokee men’s responsibilities as protectors of the Nation grew more intense, with those articulating a man’s role as protector of the Nation’s land, and another man’s role as protector of the Nation’s people. The subsequent breakdown of the good man ideal left men without a formula to avoid disharmony. As a result, acts of violence continued.

⁴⁴ Hugh Montgomery and Benjamin F. Currey to Tennessee Governor, Carroll, Cherokee Agency, September 12, 1834 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 504-5. John Howard Payne described John Walker Jr. as “very active in the United States government party among the Cherokees,” and as a result, he had “made himself unpopular on political accounts.” *Payne-Butrick Papers*, Volume II, 183.

⁴⁵ Ben Curry to Georgia Governor, Wilson Lumpkin, Cass County, Georgia, October 10, 1834 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 508-9.

⁴⁶ John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers*, Volume II, 148.

Fear in Cherokee country remained high throughout the fall of 1834, as Indian agent Ben Curry reported the recent murders were not the first acts of vengeance: “Last spring whilst Maj Ridge & his friends were on their way to Washington City An ambuscade was formed by a party of Indians whose purpose was to stop them.” These men were armed, and according to Curry, their intentions were malevolent.⁴⁷ Ridge, who was tipped off to the men’s location, took a different route and traveled safely to Washington D.C. Threats of violence, however, persisted and in the summer of 1835 Curry reported additional threats to Ridge and those like-minded, and in August, “another Murder committed on the Boddy of a Ridge by a Ross Cherokee” was reported to Georgia’s governor.⁴⁸

In December 1835, a group of Cherokee men signed, arguably the most controversial document in Cherokee history, the Treaty of New Echota. The American representative, John Schermerhorn selected New Echota, no longer the capital of the Cherokee Nation, because he believed that half of the Nation residing in Georgia would be motivated by the abuses heaped on them by Georgia’s settlers and their government to sign a treaty. Approximately five hundred Cherokees gathered to listen to Schermerhorn. After presenting the United States’ position and offer the Cherokees selected a committee

⁴⁷ Ben Curry to Georgia Governor, Wilson Lumpkin, Cass County, Georgia, November 18, 1834 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*. One of the members of the ambush party was also a Christian convert and member of a church. This seems to suggest that even though some Cherokee men converted to Christianity, their adherence to Cherokee laws and cultural norms trumped the dictates of their churches. This particular Cherokee (not named) was called before his church to answer for his act of aggression; he claimed that Lewis Ross, John Ross’s brother, planned the ambush.

⁴⁸ Ben Curry to Wilson Lumpkin, Spring Place, Georgia, June 10, 1835 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 573-75; William N. Bishop to Wilson Lumpkin, Camp Benton, August 5, 1835 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 593.

of twenty men to deliberate the government's terms. After a few of days of discussion, the committee presented the treaty for a vote. Of the eighty-six men selected to vote, only seven voted against the treaty. After the vote, the twenty-member committee signed the document and sent it with a delegation headed by Major Ridge and Elias Boudinot to Washington.⁴⁹

This treaty ensured the Cherokees' Removal to lands west of the Mississippi, and the fact that the majority of the Nation had no desire to leave caused a cleavage in the society that continued for generations. After the treaty was signed, John Ross and his supporters immediately argued that the Nation did not sanction the agreement, as the signers were not authorized by a majority of the Nation, and supported their claim with a petition of fourteen thousand signatures.⁵⁰ While the treaty and Removal cemented divisions between Cherokees opposed to or in favor of exchanging their eastern lands for those offered by the federal government west of the Mississippi, the debate over Removal during the years prior to the signing of the Treaty of New Echota also caused consternation and discord among members of the Cherokee Nation.

The ability to act as effective diplomats was a central component of Cherokee masculinity, existent for millennia. The growing inability to stave off Georgia's efforts to strip the Cherokees of their land and dignity, exacerbated by the growing inability to

⁴⁹ Theda Perdue and Michael Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 110-111. John Ridge (Major Ridge's son) and Stand Watie (Elias Boudinot's brother) were already in Washington with another Cherokee delegation headed by John Ross. Once the treaty arrived they switched delegations and signed their names to the treaty. See Theda Perdue and Michael Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 112.

⁵⁰ Theda Perdue and Michael Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, 112.

successfully petition the federal government for protection, created a crisis of manhood. Cherokee men openly debated the effectiveness of their pre-existing and current diplomatic policies. These men also presented suggestions for different courses of action. The debate over Removal is usually viewed through a political lens, but the consideration of other cultural ideals, specifically gender, sheds light on the intensely personal and emotional manner in which Cherokee politicians approached the subject of Removal.

After the signing of the Treaty of New Echota in 1835, the Removal debate among Cherokee men continued. Just a few months before the Cherokees' forced Removal in 1838, Indian agents in northwest Georgia complained to the governor that the Cherokees in their region were "collecting themselves together in Companies," and that these Cherokees declared that they did "not intend to give up their lands . . . they will fight and die on their soil." Indian agents described these intransigent Cherokees as "Ross men."⁵¹ While Major Ridge and the Treaty Party minority obviously changed their views on the masculine ideal of Cherokee men as protectors of ancient land, the majority, or "Ross men," did not. Essentially, supporters of Ross maintained their steadfast commitment to preserving the land as a gendered responsibility. The Treaty Party, on the other hand, shifted their commitment from the land to the Cherokee people. Elias Boudinot believed that the treaty would improve the Cherokees' condition, which at the

⁵¹ Richard Butler to George Gilmer, Spring Place, Georgia, March 4, 1838 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 685. In addition to complaints about armed Cherokees, agents and settlers warned that the Indians were also erecting new houses, preparing their fields for crops, and refusing to sell their livestock. See previous letter and William Jones to George Gilmer, Coosawattee, March 13, 1838 in *Cherokee Indian Letters*, 698-99.

time of Removal Boudinot described as “hungry, naked, and destitute.”⁵² For Boudinot and other Treaty Party members, manly courage lay in the willingness to risk one’s life for the future well-being of the Cherokee people, not to preserve their ancestral lands.⁵³

Most Treaty Party members generally went ahead and relocated in 1836, rather than waiting to be forcibly removed.⁵⁴ Once in their new territory, the Treaty Party members threw their lot in with the Old Settlers and agreed to fit themselves within the existing laws. When Ross arrived with the majority of the Nation in 1839, they quickly asserted their intentions to enact the will of the majority, which was to transfer the eastern Nation laws to their new home west of the Mississippi. This, of course, created a great deal of friction.⁵⁵ As discussed in the previous chapter, Old Settlers established a government for themselves quite unlike the centralized government of the eastern Cherokees, and they expected the new arrivals to accept the existent, working government of the Cherokees in Indian Territory.⁵⁶ Despite, Ross’ announcement that the various political factions reached an agreement, the majority of the members of the

⁵² Boudinot, “Documents in Relation to the Validity of the Cherokee Treaty of 1835,” 26.

⁵³ Treaty Party members were aware of the risk they were taking in supporting a policy of Removal. Boudinot recognized that “To advocate a treaty was to declare war against the established habits of thinking peculiar to the aborigines. It was to come in contact with settled prejudices—with the deep rooted attachment for the soil of our forefathers.” See Boudinot, “Documents in Relation to the Validity of the Cherokee Treaty of 1835,” 3.

⁵⁴ Treaty Party members were not the only Cherokees that fled the Nation after the signing of the Treaty of New Echota. Theda Perdue argues that typically those that left before forced Removal shared their status as slave owners. Cherokee slave owners had the wealth to arrange for their own transportation and the labor to move and reestablish their households in Indian Territory. See Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 70-2.

⁵⁵ Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism,” 150.

⁵⁶ Old Settlers elected three chiefs, which held equal and limited authority. See Chapter IV. Also, Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society*, 72-73. Duane Champagne incorrectly states that the Old Settlers had one elected chief. Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change*, 178.

Treaty Party and Old Settlers were not satisfied. This resulted in new disagreements, which were made more contentious because of the animosity over The Treaty of New Echota, and the assertion, that the earlier migrations of Old Settlers contributed to the loss of eastern Cherokee lands.⁵⁷ Old Settlers, of course, disagreed with such a characterization of their actions. They employed the good man ideal when they decided to go their own way in the face of continued colonial pressures, but as the chaos of Removal demonstrates, the good man ideal no longer provided sufficient means to deal with the political disagreements existing between Cherokee men in the 1830s.

When the majority of Cherokees arrived in Indian Territory after their arduous journey on the Trail of Tears, principal chief, John Ross, sought a meeting with Old Settler chiefs to craft a new government that formally united the two groups of the Cherokee Nation previously separated by the Mississippi River. Western chiefs, John Brown, John Looney, and John Rogers responded by expressing their belief that unification, sufficient to their liking, already occurred. The western chiefs had “taken them [the eastern emigrants] by the hand”⁵⁸ and welcomed them to their new home. As far as the Old Settlers were concerned, the eastern Cherokees were permitted to take part

⁵⁷ In a letter of instruction to a delegation charged with meeting with the three Old Settler chiefs that still refused to attend the council at the Illinois Camp Ground, Ross states, “. . . should those of our countrymen, who wish to contradistinguish themselves by the name of ‘Old Settlers,’ look upon us as strangers and intruders in this country—let them view the whole facts of the case calmly—and take a survey of their own Treaties and Acts. They will not fail to see that they themselves have had some agency in causing the ancient fire of our Fathers to be brought and kindled here by their Brothers, who have recently been forced to remove from the land of their inheritance in the East.” See John Ross and twenty-two other Cherokees to John Martin, John Drew, the Boot, Crying Buffaloe, Astolata, Thomas F. Taylor, and Bird Doublehead, Illinois Camp Ground, Cherokee Nation, July 25, 1839, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, 748-49.

⁵⁸ John Brown, John Looney, and John Rogers to John Ross and George Lowrey, Takattokah, Cherokee Nation, June 14, 1839, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, 715.

in their existing government. Western chiefs stated “Consequently, the National Council cannot justify the course of keeping up the uniting question, merely to protract a debate, when the uniting of the people has already been fully and satisfactorily accomplished.”⁵⁹ The western chiefs went on to warn Ross that if he had any intentions of instituting the laws and government of the eastern Cherokees in their new home, the Old Settlers believed such an idea “entirely repugnant to the government and laws of the Cherokee Nation, which would thereby create great dissatisfaction among the people.”⁶⁰ According to the Old Settlers, as emigrants, the eastern Cherokees were admitted at the pleasure of the Old Settlers, and as such, they fell under the laws and government of their new home. Old Settlers made the decision to go their own way to prevent disharmony when their views and conceptions of Cherokee society differed too greatly with those in the east. They established a governing system that worked for them, and they did not see the necessity in altering their structures to respond to those, regardless of their superior numbers, who followed a path that eventually led to forced, rather than voluntary, migration.⁶¹

Ross met the response of the western chiefs with “regret and Surprise,” and assured the Committee and Council members of the eastern Cherokees that his efforts to enact a formal union of the eastern and western Cherokees under a new government

⁵⁹ John Brown, John Looney, and John Rogers to John Ross and George Lowrey, Takattokah, Cherokee Nation, June 14, 1839, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, 715.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change*, 178-79; Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism,” 150-51.

would continue.⁶² To accomplish this, Ross called for the eastern and western Cherokees to meet at a national convention held at the Illinois Camp Ground on July 1, 1839. Prior to the scheduled meeting, three Treaty Party members were assassinated which further added to tensions between factions.⁶³ The western chiefs vowed to “protest against all acts that may be passed”⁶⁴ at Ross’s convention. The Old Settlers called on General Matthew Arbuckle, and by extension the United States government, to support their objections against Ross and the formation of a new government. In their petitions to Arbuckle, the western chiefs claimed the moral high road and decried the murders of the Treaty Party members. According to the chiefs the assassinations of those “who had been received as citizens of our Nation” created “distress.”⁶⁵ The Old Settlers cited the murders and the additional death threats against Cherokees “for their political acts”⁶⁶ as a reason not to concede to attend Ross’ convention. The Old Settlers voluntarily left their lands in the east, in this decision they employed the good man ideal of going one’s way to avoid disharmony. Now, based upon no action of their own that they could determine, the arriving countrymen from the east brought political disruption, and death—the ultimate source of disharmony in Cherokee society.

⁶² John Brown, John Looney, and John Rogers to John Ross and George Lowrey, Takattokah, Cherokee Nation, June 14, 1839, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, 715.

⁶³ Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change*, 179; Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism,” 151.

⁶⁴ John Brown, John Looney, John Rodgers, and John Smith to the Old Settlers, Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation, June 28, 1839, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, Volume 1, 720.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Ross protested the unwillingness of the western Cherokee leaders to attend his convention. The question of formal union and governance took on the themes of dominance and submission. As John Ross called a convention at the Illinois Camp Ground, the western chiefs responded with an invitation to a convention hosted at Fort Gibson. These competing conventions were essentially stand-offs between eastern and western leaders. John Ross wrote to Arbuckle, "Is it required, that the late emigrants relinquish all their rights, and appear before the Western Chiefs in the attitude of suppliants?"⁶⁷ Thus, the outcome of the union debate determined who would be considered a man and who would be considered a beggar. Ultimately, forced Removal signified an inability of Cherokee men to fulfill their historic masculine responsibility to protect their communities. Cherokee morale in Indian Territory was low, and Cherokees, regardless of sex, felt a loss of identity and inability to determine their fate. In this dismal atmosphere Cherokee men sought to move past the emasculation of Removal and reassert control in the affairs of their families and communities. Determining the political and governmental structure of the newly combined Cherokee Nation was a principal arena in which men struggled to ensure that their vision for Cherokee society was realized.⁶⁸

The back and forth continued, and ultimately, some Old Settlers attended Ross's convention and a formal Act of Union was declared on July 12, 1839, despite the fact that the debate over the attendance of the western chiefs continued between them and Ross

⁶⁷ John Ross, George Lowrey, Edward Gunter, and Lewis Ross to Matthew Arbuckle and Montfort Stokes, Park Hill, Cherokee Nation, June 30, 1839, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, vol. I, ed. Gary E. Moulton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 723.

⁶⁸ Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society*, 74-75.

through August.⁶⁹ No one attended the convention called at Fort Gibson, and the failure of a large number of Old Settlers and Treaty Party members to attend and take part in the Illinois Convention led to continued friction between Cherokees. This hostility resulted in violent acts and calls for a formal, federally recognized division of Cherokee political groups.⁷⁰ Ross, frustrated by Old Settler and Treaty Party efforts to engage U. S. government officials on their behalf, warned Washington politicians, “Cherokees are men, we cannot but feel like men, we would act like men.”⁷¹ According to Ross, the Cherokees did not need the intervention of the United States government; as men, the Cherokees would see to their own affairs. After the emasculation attendant with Removal and the inability of eastern Cherokee men to protect their communities, Ross and others were eager to reassert their role as men without any interference from the United States government.

In addition to political friction, the assassination of the Ridges and Boudinot set off a chain of violence that persisted until 1846. American newspapers frequently reported on murders and other acts of violence in Indian Territory involving Cherokees. Stories from the year 1839, when the majority of the eastern migrants arrived in Indian Territory, to 1846, the year the treaty was signed and a constitutional government was

⁶⁹ John Ross and twenty-seven other Cherokees to John Brown, John Looney, and John Rogers, Convention Ground, Cherokee Nation, August 6, 1839, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, vol. I, ed. Gary E. Moulton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 751-53. Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism,” 153.

⁷⁰ Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change*, 181; Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism,” 158.

⁷¹ John Ross to John Bell and the House Committee on Indian Affairs, Washington City, April 20, 1840 in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, vol. II, ed. Gary E. Moulton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 34.

formed, which facilitated a settlement between various interest groups until the outbreak of America's Civil War, demonstrated the chaotic situation. Various headlines from this six-year time span ran as follows: "Trouble Among the Cherokees"; "old party excitements are again rising in the Cherokee Nation"; "Disturbances in the Cherokee Nation"; "More Murders"; and "Barbarous Murder." To average Americans, these headlines presented a familiar portrayal of violent Indians. From the perspective of the Cherokees, however, these headlines represented struggles over masculinity and identity within their society.

Women also involved themselves in the political violence that ensued in Indian Territory. According to one oral tradition of the Treaty Party assassinations, a group of women informed the assassins where to find Elias Boudinot: he "was not at home, but was about a mile from the house getting some wood."⁷² In the eighteenth century, women decided the fate of war prisoners, either condemning them to death or adopting them into their clans. As heads of matrilineal households and clans, women were the only individuals that could provide a Cherokee identity to an outsider, through adoption. Adoptions often occurred as a means to increase population, depleted by war and disease, and to atone for the actual life of a clan member lost. As gate keepers of the clans, and by extension Cherokee society, women decided if their loss could be better atoned by a familial replacement or avenging death. While it is true that a Cherokee law made land

⁷² Grant Foreman interview of J. F. Weaver, February 25, 1938. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>. Accessed June 20, 2015.

cessions punishable with death, there is a possibility that historic traditions of blood revenge were employed. The role of women seems to give credence to this assumption. The Treaty Party members technically broke the law, of which the punishment was very clear. However, it is also true that one quarter of the Cherokee population perished on their forced trek from their eastern lands to Indian Territory. The historic tenet of blood law required atonement for those deaths. Thus, it is possible that the women who colluded with the assassins of Elias Boudinot were practicing their historic role as clan mothers and dispensers of justice.

Regardless of whether or not these women were acting in historic roles, the simple fact that they were involved at all, and played a role crucial enough to earn mention in an oral tradition recited one hundred years after the fact, attests to the active role that women continued to play in Cherokee politics. Historians have noted that as the Cherokees centralized their political structure, women lost some of their political voice, as suffrage was limited to men over eighteen years of age. The increasing efforts to create more Cherokees, by way of acknowledging the parentage of a Cherokee father, are also cited to demonstrate the presumed weakening of clan identities, and the clan's role in Cherokee life. Lastly, the outlaw of blood law, a practice carried out at the discretion of the clans, seems to suggest that the role of clans, and by extension, the role of women (as their heads), lost their importance in Cherokee society.⁷³

⁷³ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 145-48.

Some oral traditions, however, counter these assumptions. An interviewee attested to the connection between clan identity and the ability to heal:

The Clan that they belonged to had a great deal to do with their doctoring. When an Indian doctor was called to a certain case, the first thing he wanted to know was the Clan that the patient belonged to. They believed that the patient and the doctor belonging to the same Clan would not cure.⁷⁴

A practitioner of Cherokee medicine, Ollie Falling, provided a similar explanation of clan affiliation and medicine. According to Falling, she “was taught at an early age to recognize her clan and to remember it.” She went on to say that seven clans existed in the Cherokee Nation, and children “took their clan after their mother.” In regard to medicine: clan identity “had lots to do with the Indian doctoring. No persons of the same clan were allowed to doctor. They taught that the medicine would not do any good.”⁷⁵ The continuance of clan identity and its connection to mothers demonstrates that women were not marginalized in all segments of Cherokee society, and Falling’s role as an Indian doctor further attests to the types of power Cherokees permitted women to employ. As heads of the Cherokee clanswomen maintained aspects of their historic gendered power, which continued to act as a counterweight to that of men; therefore, as men attempted to reinvent their roles in the wake of Removal they continued to consider their masculinity in relation to femininity.

⁷⁴ Gus Hummingbird interview of Catcher Rock, June 12, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>. Accessed June 20, 2015.

⁷⁵ Gus Hummingbird interview of Ollie Falling, November 23, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*.

The actions of the Cherokee women provide some evidence that clan blood law was reinstated amid the chaos of Removal, but it is difficult at times to discern whether acts of violence were a revival of blood law, or simple revenge and lawlessness that occurred in areas with little to no law enforcement. One such example is Tom Starr, and the “Tom Starr War.” The Ridges and Elias Boudinot, while the most noted victims of anti-Treaty Party violence, were not the only victims of the Cherokees that believed they had a responsibility to kill the signers of the Treaty of New Echota. James Starr, father of Tom Starr, was murdered on his front porch. In addition to James Starr, his sons Buck and Washing Starr were shot; Buck died as a result.

According to the Starr family, Tom Starr later visited the grave of his father and vowed “that he would avenge his death, and that he would kill every Full Blood who had had anything to do with the death of his father.”⁷⁶ Tom Starr’s attacks continued for approximately five years. Tom Starr’s declaration that preceded his half a decade’s worth of violence indicates that a revival of blood law was a motivating factor in his actions. However, according to historic concepts regarding Cherokee kinship, James Starr would not be considered the relative of his son. Tom Starr’s relatives would be those members of his own clan, traced through his mother’s lineage. Therefore, Tom Starr’s actions reveal that if he was invoking blood law to avenge the death of his father as he promised, ideas of Cherokee kinship altered to reflect the patrilineal arrangement of some Cherokee

⁷⁶ Story provided by Clarence Starr penned by his father, J. C. (Cale) Starr, “A Chapter of Bloodshed Surpassing Belief: The Tom Starr War—Its exciting causes, results, and a sketch of the Principal Actor in a Realistic Drama,” *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>. Accessed June 25, 2015.

households. In this way, Cherokee kin changed, but a man's responsibility to respond and seek revenge harkened back to the historic practice of blood law.⁷⁷

The original purpose of blood law, or clan vengeance was the reestablishment of balance to the universe. As discussed earlier, balance was a central tenet in Cherokee society. Death, especially murder (even if accidental), disrupted the delicate balance of the universe. According to this worldview, Cherokee men had a responsibility to restore balance and harmony to their society after the murder of one of their clan members. Once a life was taken from the offending clan harmony was restored. In this framework, retaliation did not continue indefinitely. As a result of the Removal crisis, historic masculine practices to maintain harmony and balance in Cherokee society proved ineffective. The good man ideal broke down, and blood law, long an outlawed practice, was resurrected with disastrous consequences. While some Cherokee men employed this historic masculine act its application did little to achieve the historic goals of clan vengeance—rather than control and limit bloodshed, this particular expression of manhood perpetuated and amplified violence in the Cherokee Nation.⁷⁸

In fact, Tom Starr was either an outlaw or a hero, depending on whether judgment came from supporters of Ross or the Treaty Party. In February 1846, the *Cherokee*

⁷⁷ Stand Watie's brother-in-law described the actions of Starr and others as revenge for the death of their kin: "I think there is now to be no end to bloodshed, Since the Starr boys & the Ridges have commenced revenging the death of their relatives." John Candy to Stand Watie, Park Hill, Cherokee Nation, April 10, 1846, Cherokee Nation Papers.

⁷⁸ Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 49-51; 142-43. The Cherokees officially outlawed clan vengeance in 1810, but as stated earlier, there is some evidence that it continued during the period before Removal despite the ban. See also Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 151. If some did continue to utilize this historic tradition prior to the Removal crisis there is no evidence that it was misappropriated resulting in continued violence and retribution.

Advocate published a call “that the “Starrs” either be apprehended or given over to the proper authorities: or at least be driven from the State.”⁷⁹ The chief crime cited against Tom Starr and others was murder: “these men are deeply died with murderous blood.”⁸⁰ But as one group’s terrorist is another group’s patriot, Treaty Party members described the actions of the infamous Starr with some seeming admiration. “Those fellows, especially Tom Starr, are talked of frequently and with wonderment about here. He is considered a second Rinaldo Rinaldina . . . all sorts of romantic deeds are attributed to this fellow, and the white people in town and around say they had rather meet the devil himself that Tom Starr!”⁸¹ It is clear that family members and supporters of the Treaty Party felt exacting some type of vengeance a noble action, but if Starr and others were invoking blood law their interpretation of it differed from the historic practice.⁸²

As criminal acts continued to mount, many Cherokees grew numb to the news of violence. In one particular letter, a Treaty Party member reported that the murderer of James Starr was “killed and scalped.” The person that identified the murderer of James

⁷⁹ The *Cherokee Advocate*, February 5, 1846. The *Advocate* reprinted this article that originally appeared in the *Arkansas Intelligencer*. Watie and his supporters considered the *Advocate* the mouthpiece of the Ross government and supporters. The editor of the *Cherokee Advocate* was William Porter Ross, nephew of John Ross. See Edward Everett Dale and Gaston Litton eds., *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History as Told in the Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939), 32.

⁸⁰ The *Cherokee Advocate*, February 5, 1846.

⁸¹ John Rollin Ridge to Stand Watie, Fayetteville, Arkansas, April 17, 1846. Cherokee Nation Papers, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK. Rinaldo Rinaldina was the protagonist of an eighteenth-century, German romance novel, *Rinaldo Rinaldina* by Christian August Vulpius.

⁸² The numbers of robberies and murders of not only Cherokees, but also Arkansas settlers by either Tom Starr or his associates suggest that perhaps Starr and others were taking advantage of the lawlessness that existed in Indian Territory to engage in a criminal act. As illustrated above, it is rather difficult to conclude anything definitive from the evidence, as portrayals of Starr and his motivations differ dramatically depending on political loyalties. For more on the crimes of Starr see: Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs: In the Wake of Empire* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1998), 208-9; A Troubled History; Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society*,

Starr was “hung.” Others were robbed of their slaves and sometimes killed in the process, and some unnamed individuals were “cut up” in their homes and “scalped” in the mountains. According to Candy “Murders in the country have been so frequent until the people care as little about hearing these things as they would hear of the death of a common dog.”⁸³ John Ridge’s son also expressed this sentiment in a letter to Stand Watie reporting, “No very important transactions have happened since your departure, except the killing of five or six Indians of the Ross party.”⁸⁴ Murder was the most potent event to disrupt harmony, and after Removal it appeared that Cherokees no longer had the cultural faculties to alleviate the disharmony that existed in their society.

In one case, however, an act of violence provided the Treaty Party with a stage to defend their actions and promote their expression of manhood: the decision to discontinue their defense of the land to protect the well-being of the people. In this way, the trial of Stand Watie for the murder of James Foreman was more than a murder trial, it presented an arena to formally assert the actions of treaty supporters as manly, and the actions of the assassins as cowardly. Additionally, because Watie’s defense placed the politics of Removal at the center of their claim of self-defense, in finding Watie not guilty, the jury validated the acts of vengeance committed by Treaty Party members. The courtroom arguments and witness statements demonstrated the contested nature of

⁸³ John Candy to Stand Watie, Park Hill, Cherokee Nation, April 10, 1846, Cherokee Nation Papers, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK.

⁸⁴ John Rollin Ridge to Stand Watie, Fayetteville, Arkansas, April 14, 1846. Cherokee Nation Papers.

Cherokee masculinity in the Removal era by questioning the rights of Cherokee men to act as representatives for the people.

Stand Watie (*Degadoga*) became the recognized leader of the Treaty Party after the deaths of his brother, uncle, and cousin: Elias Boudinot, Major Ridge, and John Ridge. Watie was born in Georgia in 1806 and received an education from the Moravian missionaries in their school at Springplace. After signing the Treaty of New Echota, Watie moved to Indian Territory in 1837. Even though he was also targeted on the same day as his brother and others, he was not at home when the assassins arrived. In May 1842, Watie ran into James Foreman a supporter of Ross, in a grocery store in Maysville, Arkansas. The men exchanged heated words and a physical altercation ensued. Foreman continued to attack Watie even after being stabbed, and Watie responded by shooting Foreman dead. Watie turned himself in, and went to trial with a plea of self-defense. The court case that followed, and by extension, this debate over manhood, was not deliberated by a Cherokee jury. Rather, because the murder occurred in Arkansas, and because Watie believed his chances of acquittal were greater among Arkansas citizens than his fellow Cherokees, the case was prosecuted in Arkansas. Watie's decision highlights the contentious nature of Cherokee factionalism at the time.⁸⁵

Alfred Arrington, also an Arkansas citizen, opened the defense for Watie, and his words made it immediately apparent that Watie's claim of self-defense would depend on

⁸⁵ Stanley Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs*, 195.

whether or not the actions of those that killed the Ridges and Boudinot were justified.

Arrington said he:

expected to prove that about the 20th June, 1839 the notorious John Ross, and a band of wicked conspirators whose names are a disgrace to humanity, conceived the diabolical plot of murdering, in a base and cowardly manner. . . . That in pursuance of this diabolical plot, certain fiends in human shape, were elected, armed, and sent out to take away the lives of unoffending and unsuspecting victims. That on the morning of the 22nd of June 1839, Major Ridge, Elias Boudinot, and John Ridge, fell by their brutal hands, that the prisoner at the bar only escaped by timely notice, and his superior courage.⁸⁶

Arrington called the manhood of the murderers of the Treaty Party into question, when he asserted “assassins are always cowards.”⁸⁷ According to Arrington, the assassins received protection and pardon from John Ross, and together, Ross and his followers “deposed” the Old Settlers’ Chiefs and nullified their existing government structure. These same “fiends” continued to make attempts on Watie’s life, and Foreman was chief among this “banditti.” Watie:

was only saved by a gallantry and prowess, alike honorable to the blood which runs in his veins, and the chivalrous age in which he lives. In a word we expect to prove that if ever there was a case where a man acted in self-defence—from a necessity enforced upon him by imperious circumstances, Stand Watie’s was the case.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ George W. Paschal, “A Report of the Trial of Stand Watie Charged with the Murder of James Foreman” (Van Buren: Thomas Storne, 1845), 1-2, Cherokee Nation Papers, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK.

⁸⁷ Paschal, “A Report of the Trial,” 2, Cherokee Nation Papers.

⁸⁸ Paschal, “A Report of the Trial,” 3, Cherokee Nation Papers.

In order to believe that Watie acted in self-defense, one would have to conclude first that the enforcement of the death penalty punishment was somehow unlawful, or as Arrington framed it: cowardly, inhuman, and certainly not manly.

Several witnesses were high-profile white men, such as Arkansas governor James Miller and missionary Cephas Washburn. The latter testified that on June 21, 1839, he and another missionary departed for John Ridge's home. On the way there, the pair stopped at the home of John Ross. Washburn noted, "A considerable number of Cherokees were there: Ross seemed to be in a bad humor. . . . From indications we remarked as soon as we left, that something was wrong—or that something was in preparation which we did not understand."⁸⁹ After Washburn left Ross's house he and his fellow missionary encountered another Indian home, of Jack Nicholson, where they found his horse mounted with pistols. Nicholson was curt and informed them that he had just returned from a council. The missionaries stayed at Jesse Busheyhead's house. Washburn remarked that Busheyhead, a Cherokee Baptist minister, "was not at home." The following morning Washburn was informed that the Ridges and Boudinot had been killed, "by order of Council according to law. That companies had been designated to kill certain persons . . . and that James Foreman had been the leader of the party who killed Major Ridge."⁹⁰ Washburn went on to testify that Watie was also targeted as a signer of the Treaty of New Echota. Washburn's testimony did not include any information about

⁸⁹ Paschal, "A Report of the Trial," 4, Cherokee Nation Papers.

⁹⁰ Paschal, "A Report of the Trial," 4-5, Cherokee Nation Papers.

Watie's killing of Foreman, or any of the events on that day leading up to Foreman's death.

Other witness testimony also centered on the murders of the Ridges and Boudinot, rather than Foreman's death. One witness testified that when an arrest warrant was issued for the murderers of the Treaty Party, "Foreman fled as one of the murderers . . . [and was] Always considered as one of the murderers of Major Ridge; and John Walker."⁹¹ Another stated that he raced to Watie's house on the day of the murders to warn him. On his way there, he passed a group of armed Cherokees that he believed were on their way to kill Watie. A few days after this event, the witness was visiting Reverend Samuel Worcester, when his home was surrounded by a group of Cherokees looking for Watie. Foreman was not mentioned as a member of the group that was traveling to Watie's home on the day of the assassinations, or as one of the Cherokees that surrounded Worcester's home. John Bell, Watie's brother-in-law and fellow treaty signer, testified that Foreman told Bell that he was safe because he saved the life of one of Foreman's friends, "but that Watie could never be forgiven" for signing the Treaty of New Echota.⁹² As these various testimonies demonstrate, the central issue in Watie's trial was the lawfulness of Removal.

⁹¹ Paschal, "A Report of the Trial," 4, Cherokee Nation Papers. Similarly, to James Starr, Stand Watie's murder of James Foreman could not be seen as clan revenge, in the historic matrilineal sense because Major Ridge was his paternal uncle; therefore, they were not members of the same clan or technically related according to historic Cherokee customs. For Ridge-Watie family lineage see Emmett Starr, *Starr's History of the Cherokee Indians*, ed. Jack Gregory and Rennard Strickland (Fayetteville: Indian Heritage Association, 1967), 381.

⁹² Paschal, "A Report of the Trial," 5, Cherokee Nation Papers.

The perception of which murders (those of the Treaty Party or that of Foreman) were just or unjust depended on whether the jury supported the actions of the Cherokees who signed the Treaty of New Echota. Central to Watie's defense, and repeated by his fellow-Treaty Party witnesses, was the idea that the signers of the Treaty of New Echota acted as men: that despite the risks, they needed to have the courage to act in the best interest of their Nation. This position, laid out so clearly by Boudinot before his death, and by Watie's defense during his murder trial, did not apply to the actions of John Ross and his supporters, according to Watie and his allies.

As further evidence of "the conspiracy of Mr. J. Ross, and others, to take away the lives of the prominent men of the Treaty Party,"⁹³ the defense presented certified copies of correspondence concerning the Cherokees in the year of 1839. These communications included reports from the Secretary of War, the President's message, and a report of the Indian Commissioner. The Treaty of New Echota was read to establish that Watie was targeted as one of its signers, and a reading of Nation documents followed. As the Watie trial demonstrates, ideals of masculinity, namely the appropriate employment of violence were highly contested after Removal. Watie's brother Elias Boudinot, defended the actions of the Treaty Party stating that they had a responsibility to act in the best interests of the Cherokee people, even if the majority of the Cherokees did not agree. It is clear from Watie's defense, however, that the same considerations were not allowed for John Ross and his supporters.

⁹³ Paschal, "A Report of the Trial," 5-6, Cherokee Nation Papers.

When Ross arrived in Indian Territory, with the numerically superior emigrating Cherokees, their efforts to establish a new government were considered hostile actions by both the Treaty Party and many Old Settlers. The Treaty Party claimed that Ross acted unlawfully in 1839 because Treaty Party members and many Old Settlers were not included in the council. Watie and other members of the Treaty Party seemed to forget that when they met at New Echota and signed the treaty that resulted in forced Removal, they did so as a minority group, without the sanction of their principal chief and the majority of the Cherokee people.⁹⁴

During the debate over Removal in the early 1830s both Ross supporters and treaty supporters believed that they were fulfilling their roles as men, but what being a man meant was fatally disputed at this moment in Cherokee history. These factions and beliefs persisted west of the Mississippi along with acts of violence. The animosities created by the debates over Removal in the east escalated once the Cherokees arrived in Indian Territory. The violence that erupted in Indian Territory among the Cherokees began with the assassination of the Treaty Party members, Major Ridge, John Ridge, and Elias Boudinot, in 1839. The assassinations and murders committed in Indian Territory can be seen as expressions of masculine traditions enduring since the eighteenth century and perhaps even earlier. The identities of those responsible for the murders of the Treaty Party members are not known, but many blamed John Ross. He wrote in June 1839, that a “party of armed men . . . hold me accountable” for the murders of the Ridges and Elias

⁹⁴ Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism,” 154-55.

Boudinot.⁹⁵ Ross feared that this party planned to attack his home. This seemed a reasonable assumption in light of the fact Ross had previously been notified that Stand Watie, Elias Boudinot's brother, was "raising a company of men for the purpose of coming forthwith to take my life!"⁹⁶ Ross's supporters met these threats against Ross with a show of force. Men "assembled" around Ross's home to repel an attack that luckily did not happen. There is no firm proof, however, that John Ross was involved in the decision to assassinate the treaty party members.

In an essay that defended the actions of those that killed the Treaty Party members, John Howard Payne returned to the importance of land to Cherokee identity that featured so prominently in earlier attempts to prevent Removal. Payne stated that unlike other Indian groups that tended to wander throughout various regions, the Cherokees "From time immemorial" had "possession of the same territory."⁹⁷ Payne goes on:

They affirm that their forefathers sprung from that ground . . . These lands of their ancestors they value above all things in the world; they venerate the places where their bones lie interred, and esteem it disgraceful, in the highest degree, to relinquish these sacred repositories.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ John Ross to Matthew Arbuckle, Park Hill, June 23, 1839 in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, vol. I, ed. Gary E. Moulton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 920.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ John Howard Payne, *Payne-Butrick Papers*, Volume VI, 418.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

A Cherokee was considered a “coward” and “treated as an outcast” if he refused to defend “these hereditary possessions.”⁹⁹ “[E]ven blood & life itself” were not too high a price to pay to maintain their sovereignty and defend their lands.¹⁰⁰ These statements recall to mind the words of Womankiller, who begged his countrymen not to leave the land which held his bones. Thus, previous traditions of the sacredness of the land and men’s responsibility to uphold the Cherokees’ “hereditary possessions” justified acts of violence after Removal.

On August 6, 1846, approximately seven years after supporters of the Cherokee Nation expressed their hope that among the Cherokees “the hatchet [was] amicably buried,”¹⁰¹ the Nation announced: “all difficulties and differences heretofore existing between the several parties of the Cherokee Nation, are settled and adjusted, and shall, as far as possible be forgotten and forever buried in Oblivion!” Furthermore, the Cherokees declared “all party distinctions shall cease,” and “all past offences and crimes are pardoned . . . In order that a general and correct understanding of the provisions of said Treaty may be made known and a renewal of good feeling and fellowship again restored.”¹⁰² This treaty marked an end to the violence that began east of the Mississippi and lasted over a decade.

⁹⁹ *Payne-Buttrick Papers*, Volume VI, 418. In this and the previous notes, Payne cites Alexander Hewatt’s *Historical account of the rise & progress of the colonies of South Carolina and Georgia*, vol. 2 (London, 1777), 201.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* Here Payne cites William Bartram’s *Travels* (London edition, 1777), 483. See also Gregory Waselkov and Kathryn E. Holland Braund eds. *William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 112.

¹⁰¹ Quoted in Gerard Reed, “Postremoval Factionalism,” 155.

¹⁰² Resolution of George Lowery, published in the *Cherokee Advocate*, October 29, 1846.

While the Cherokees finally agreed on a government structure, constitution, and laws, many other components of identity, such as masculinity remained in flux. The violence did not lead to a consensus and many Cherokee men still felt resentful for the years of conflict. Even so, the events of the Removal era caused men to openly debate and renegotiate their roles as Cherokee men. The good man ideal was no longer enough to shelter Cherokee men and society from colonialism. Individual politics could no longer guide men's decisions.

If we return to the recollections of Elizabeth Watts, we find that "the white people used all means to get the Indians out of Georgia." In a world in which colonial pressures had robbed Cherokee men of their ability to employ the good man ideal, Cherokee men, in their gendered roles as politicians and diplomats, as well as uncles, fathers, and husbands held a responsibility to protect their communities. They expressed this obligation through a promotion of sacred connections to the land, and they vowed to fight further cessions. Colonial pressures continued to mount throughout the nineteenth century, however, and as a result the Treaty Party shifted their position from protectors of the land to protectors of the people. Supporters and opponents of Removal believed they were fulfilling the masculine role of protector. The forced Removal of the Cherokees created a crisis in Cherokee society, which resulted in violence. Some violence may be accredited to a revival of blood law, the eighteenth-century method of preserving harmony between clans, but other examples do not support such a claim. Regardless of the motivation, Watts tells us "the Indians did not want to fight . . . but they had to take

one side or another”¹⁰³ Thus, in a world of competing notions of masculinity, one had to take a position, or lose one’s identity as a man.

¹⁰³ L.D. Wilson interview of Mrs. Elizabeth Watts, April 27, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*.

CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE

John Candy wrote to his brother-in-law, Stand Watie prior to the 1846 treaty between the Cherokees. In this letter, Candy penned a warning: “The murders is a stumbling block which will haunt this people until satisfaction is had.”¹ The “murders” to which Candy referred were those of Major and John Ridge and Elias Boudinot. The acts of violence taken against these signers of the Treaty of New Echota cast a very long shadow across the Cherokee Nation in the West, and as Candy foretold these assassinations haunted the Cherokee people for generations.

One theory claims that the Keetoowahs, a secret society among the Cherokees, were responsible for the assassination of Major Ridge, John Ridge, and Elias Boudinot. Discussing the early Keetoowahs, and whether or not they existed as a defined group is somewhat difficult.² The little information extant lies within various oral traditions and histories, and oftentimes these sources do not agree. Some claim that the Keetoowahs

¹ John Candy to Stand Watie, undated, Cherokee Nation Papers, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK.

² Janey B. Hendrix, “Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs,” *Journal of Cherokee Studies* VIII, no.1 (Spring 1983): 22-39; Janey B. Hendrix, “Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs,” *Journal of Cherokee Studies* VIII, no. 2 (Fall 1983): 73-85. Duane Champagne also states that the Keetoowahs were involved in the assassination of the treaty signers. According to Champagne, the Keetoowahs were possibly an ancient group that acted during times of crisis. They convened after removal, represented by each of the seven clans, and held a vote regarding the fate of the Ridges and Waties. Having voted in favor of assassination, they assigned a group of members to perform the task. See Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change: Constitutional Governments Among the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Creek* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 145, 179-80.

were a religious organization, others that they were political. The origination of the group has been cited as specifically, “in the days of Atlantis,” and when young Cherokees learned “the game of graft.” More general beginnings, such as in the “old Nation in the East,” have also been mentioned. Additionally, various branches of the Keetoowahs, such as the Night Hawks and Pin Indians have also been identified, sometimes as synonymous with the Keetoowahs, and other times as subsections. The one major consistency, however, is the fact that the oral histories that identify the assassins of the Ridges and Boudinot claim they were members of a secret society or Keetoowahs.

The majority of those interviewed during the WPA project state that the Keetoowahs formed prior to Removal, and while they differ slightly about the exact date of their formation, they all agree that the Keetoowahs were the oldest secret society among the Cherokees.³ According to one interviewee, who learned of the Keetoowahs from his maternal great-uncle, the Keetoowahs formed to protect the interests of Cherokees against the educated members of their Nation who “learned the game of graft.” “The old Cherokees knew that the educated Cherokees were going to betray the

³ Those that differ on these points are: Elizabeth Watts marks the beginning of the Keetoowahs to the era immediately preceding the American Civil War. A Baptist missionary, Evan Jones, formerly organized a group of Cherokees that promoted abolition. This group was seen as a counter weight to societies made up of slaveholding Cherokees, such as the Masons and Golden Knights. Watts seems to be citing this date as the beginning of the Keetoowahs. See L.D. Wilson interview of Mrs. Elizabeth Watts, April 27, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>. John Redbird Smith stated that the Keetoowahs were an ancient organization that existed prior to the arrival of Europeans, more religious than political and not a secret. Smith was a prominent leader of the Keetoowahs during the period of Allotment, and it is possible that his explanation of the group’s beginnings and mission were directly connected to the efforts to fight Allotment. See Jas. S. Buchanan interview of John Redbird Smith, May 26, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>.

tribe,” and because “there were not enough of those old timers to control the elections” they created a secret society to protect and promote their interests.⁴ The Keetoowahs initially “met in the woods at mid-night,” and “stationed guards around their meetings” to ensure that the group’s discussions were not overheard by spies. According to this interviewee, the Pin Indians were formed out of the Keetoowahs once in Indian Territory, and it was their purpose to “hunt and kill the betrayers of the Cherokees back East.”⁵

Another oral history told of a secret “council” held in Indian Territory that voted to “remove by death the principal signers of the treaty made in 1835.”⁶ This group used the law that made unauthorized land sales punishable by death as reason and justification for their actions. These men followed the ideal created at the beginning of the nineteenth century that necessitated Cherokee men to defend their attachment to their lands in the east, even with violence. The men that murdered the Treaty Party members expressed their manhood and communicated their continued commitment to eastern lands, even in the wake of Removal.

The Keetoowah organization also sheds light on the continued significance of clan identities and their connection to gender ideals. According to John Redbird Smith, in

⁴ Gus Hummingbird interview of Clem Hogner, July 26, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>.

⁵ Ibid. See also, Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change: Constitutional Governments Among the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Creek* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 145, 181.

⁶ Elizabeth Ross interview of S. W. Ross, October 18, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>. See also Hummingbird and Bigby interview of Walker Gott, December 14, 1937, *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>. Gott states that the Keetoowahs were formed in the East, and some of their members killed the Treaty Party members.

an altered creation story, the Great Spirit's seven sons, which represented the "seven Heavens . . . were blessed and multiplied." Each of the sons created their own clan: Wolf, Bear, Lyon, Terrapin, Bird, Deer, and Savannah." A Chief and a separate Medicine Man presided over each of the clans, and a "great" Chief and Medicine Man governed the entire group. In Smith's tradition, there is a separation between the secular and spiritual matters. The Chiefs did not act as spiritual advisors, and they were subordinate to the Medicine Men. According to Smith, "in the far distant past from some unknown source and cause there arose great strife among the people of the tribe." The Medicine Men responded by removing themselves from the rest of their people. In the mountains, these men fasted and sought the council of the Great Spirit.

All of the Medicine Men attended the same location in the mountains despite the fact that they told no one of their intentions. Once they were all gathered the Great Spirit told the men "for their people to form as one great body bound together for the protections of all and equality of rights and that body would survive and be known as Kee-Too-Wah."⁷ This story highlights the importance of identity in Cherokee society, as it credits the clans with creating the societal and leadership structures. The divisions in Cherokee society are also present in this narrative. In the eighteenth century, Cherokee towns were separated by geography, varying dialects, and individual alliances with outside groups. As such, these towns were autonomous units; at times they worked together, and on other occasions they worked at cross-purposes. The emphasis was local

⁷ Jas. S. Buchanan interview of John Redbird Smith, May 26, 1937. *Indian Pioneer Papers*, The Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, <https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/>.

or regional rather than national. This story attests to early divisions, and several instances of discord formed the basis of this study.

Even though the Cherokees signed a treaty with each other in 1846, tensions continued and violence broke out again in the 1850s. The divisions of the 1850s mirrored those in broader American society between proslavery and antislavery supporters. The majority of the Cherokee Nation continued to own no slaves, and in 1858-59, the Baptist minister Evan Jones revived the Keetoowah society to gain greater support for abolition in Cherokee society. Keetoowahs were considered “conservatives,” or traditionalists, but such labels obscure much more than they reveal about these Cherokee men. The Keetoowahs of the 1850s were typically subsistence farmers and considered themselves the protectors of Cherokee culture. Even so, these men engaged in farm work and were performing roles historically done by women. This fact suggests a break with tradition, rather than a continuation of it. Most significantly, as the involvement of Jones suggests, these men were self-proclaimed Protestant Christians. This is not to suggest that the Keetoowahs did not struggle to maintain other aspects of Cherokee culture in the 1850s. The Keetoowah Constitution, for instance, stated that members of the society must be “uneducated,” meaning they lacked Western education. Even so, the point of *significant* difference between Keetoowahs and other Cherokees was slave ownership.⁸

⁸ Patrick N. Mingos, *Slavery in the Cherokee Nation: The Keetoowah Society and the Defining of a People, 1855-1867* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 77-81; Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change*, 182; Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979).

Many historians note the significance of the slavery debate among Cherokees in the mid-nineteenth century; however, it is also important to note that the divisions that emerged in the 1850s were not vastly different from those of the previous decades of turmoil. The militant Keetoowahs, referred to as Pins, attempted to assassinate Cherokee planters, destroyed their property, and killed their slaves. Because they killed slaves, Pins demonstrated anger toward a particular political group as a motivation rather than abolitionist sentiment. The Treaty Party consisted of a minority of Cherokees in the 1830s, not only because they supported Removal, but also because they owned slaves and plantations. Members of this party traveled west before the rest of the Nation was forcibly removed, and they relied on their slaves to transport their possessions and establish new homesteads for them when they arrived in Indian Territory. In the 1850s these individuals were still a minority of the population and still owned slaves; therefore, the roots of the discord in Cherokee society in the mid-nineteenth century ran all the way back to the east and Removal politics. Slavery compounded and exacerbated generations of old grudges and resentments. Even though Pins did not own slaves and used abolitionist arguments to articulate their identity in contrast to slave-owning Cherokees, the Pins' targets were also former Treaty Party members.⁹

Old animosities were acted upon, and the Civil War in the Cherokee Nation proved a violent, destructive conflict, in which few distinguished between combatant and

⁹ Patrick N. Mingos, *Slavery in the Cherokee Nation: The Keetoowah Society and the Defining of a People, 1855-1867* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 71-75; Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change*, 182-84; Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979).

civilian. The violence of the conflict resulted in a population loss of seven thousand. Countless homes and farms were burned and pillaged. As early as 1863, one-quarter of Cherokee children were orphaned, and one-third of Cherokee women were widowed. Despite the disastrous consequences, Stand Watie continued to fight, and was the last Confederate general to surrender. An act to reestablish peace in the Cherokee Nation passed in July 13, 1865, and in October 1865, the entire Cherokee Council met for the first time since the outbreak of hostilities in 1861.¹⁰

The continuation of disharmony and a lack of unity continued, exacerbated by the continued pressures of American colonialism, particularly the dismantling of Native governments that took place after the passage of the Dawes Act in 1887. Even though a formal government body no longer existed, the Keetoowahs continued to meet as a society, and on August 24, 1992, the Bureau of Indian Affairs recognized the United Keetoowah Band as autonomous group of Cherokees.¹¹ While the Keetoowahs went their own way to reestablish harmony, efforts in the Cherokee Nation West center on memorialization and historical memory. The Cherokee Nation West offers visitors a “Passport” that allows tourists to go to the multiple museums and other historic locations throughout the Nation. Visitors are directed to the grave of John Ross and the Cherokee Jail, among other places. The maps do not mark the graves of Treaty Party members and cousins John Ridge and Elias Boudinot, and an interactive exhibit at the Cherokee Jail

¹⁰ Patrick N. Mingos, *Slavery in the Cherokee Nation: The Keetoowah Society and the Defining of a People, 1855-1867* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 159-70.

¹¹ “Keetoowah History Essay,” United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians: www.ukb-nsn.gov/documents/history/historyessay.pdf (accessed February 16, 2017).

lets tourists know that Tom Starr was an “outlaw” rather than a “patriot.” These few examples illustrate that Cherokees in Oklahoma reestablished harmony by silencing the opposition from generations ago.¹²

¹² Museum sites mentioned were visited by the author in July, 2015.

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